

To: Councillor Lovelock (Chair)
Councillors Leng, Carnell, Emberson, Ennis,
Gavin, Hornsby-Smith, Moore, Page,
Robinson, Rowland, Williams and Yeo

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21 March 2023

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NOTICE OF MEETING - PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE 29 MARCH 2023

A meeting of the Planning Applications Committee will be held on Wednesday, 29 March 2023 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Civic Offices, Bridge Street, Reading RG1 2LU. The Agenda for the meeting is set out below.

AGENDA	ACTION	WARDS AFFECTED	PAGE NO
1. MINUTES	-		9 - 18
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST	-		
3. QUESTIONS	-		
4. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS	Decision		19 - 22
5. PLANNING APPEALS	Information		23 - 26
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7. 84 BROAD STREET - PROPOSAL TO ADD TO THE LIST OF LOCALLY-IMPORTANT BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES	Decision	ABBEY	33 - 50
8. CONSULTATION ON INCREASING PLANNING FEES AND PERFORMANCE	Decision	BOROUGHWIDE	51 - 60

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9.	CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO THE GENERAL PERMITTED DEVELOPMENT ORDER	Decision	BOROUGHWIDE	61 - 68
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PLANNING APPLICATIONS TO BE CONSIDERED

10.	220567/FUL - 109B OXFORD ROAD	Decision	ABBEY	69 - 82
	<p>Proposal Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary A5 takeaway and replacement shopfront (Part retrospective)</p> <p>Recommendation Application Refused</p>			
11.	220957/FUL - 26-90 READING BUS GARAGE, GREAT KNOLLYS STREET	Decision	ABBEY	83 - 90
	<p>Proposal Installation of solar PV panels and associated equipment at Reading Bus Depot. The PV panels will be situated on the existing roof of the main building at the Depot. It is proposed to install a maximum of 1402 solar PV panels with approximate dimension 1m x 1.75m.</p> <p>Recommendation Application Permitted</p>			
12.	221563/FUL - 1 EPPING CLOSE	Decision	ABBEY	91 - 114
	<p>Proposal Proposed demolition of 8 garages and construction of 2 x 3 bedroom residential units.</p> <p>Recommendation Application Refused</p>			
13.	221312/VAR - READING GOLF CLUB, 17 KIDMORE END ROAD, EMMER GREEN	Decision	EMMER GREEN	115 - 180
	<p>Proposal Outline planning application with matters reserved in respect of Appearance for demolition of clubhouse and erection of a new residential scheme (c3 use) including affordable housing and public open space at former reading golf club without complying with conditions 5 (Plans), 8&9 (Emissions) 10&11 (SuDS), 12 (Levels), 13 (Mix), 17 (AMS), 19 (Habitat Enhancement), 20 (CEMP), 22 (Biodiversity), 25&26 (Contamination), 29 (CMS), 34 (Cycle Parking), 35 (Refuse), 39 (Car Parking), 41 (Traffic Calming) & 44 (Archaeology) of outline permission 211843 for amendments including changes to layout, mix, parking, drainage, landscaping, open space and energy.</p> <p>Recommendation Permitted subject to Legal Agreement</p>			
14.	220930/REM - READING GOLF CLUB, 17 KIDMORE END ROAD, EMMER GREEN	Decision	EMMER GREEN	181 - 242
	<p>Proposal Application for approval of reserved matters (appearance) submitted pursuant to outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR</p> <p>Recommendation Application Permitted</p>			
15.	230024/APC - 17 KIDMORE END ROAD, EMMER GREEN	Decision	EMMER GREEN	243 - 288

Proposal Application for approval of details reserved by condition 29 (Construction Method Statement) of planning permission ref. 211843
Recommendation Application Permitted

16. 220922/FUL - 71-73 CAVERSHAM Decision THAMES 289 - 378
ROAD

Proposal Partial demolition of former retail warehouse and erection of a mixed-use building comprising 29 residential units, retail floorspace (Use Class E(a)) at ground floor and associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping (amended description).
Recommendation Permitted subject to Legal Agreement

17. 221844/REG3 - 124 WHITLEY WOOD Decision WHITLEY 379 - 384
ROAD

Proposal To provide a hard-standing and crossover onto the highway from the front garden onto Whitley Wood Road.
Recommendation Application Permitted

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GUIDE TO PLANNING APPLICATIONS Agenda Annex

1. There are many different types of applications processed by the Planning Service and the following codes are used to abbreviate the more common types of permission sought:
 - FUL - Full detailed planning permission for development or change of use
 - OUT - Principal of developing a site or changing a use
 - REM - Detailed matters “reserved matters” - for permission following approval of an outline planning application.
 - HOU - Applications for works to domestic houses
 - ADV - Advertisement consent
 - APC - Approval of details required by planning conditions
 - VAR - Significant change to a planning permission previously granted
 - NMA - Insignificant change to a planning permission previously granted
 - ADJ - Consultation from neighbouring authority on application in their area
 - LBC - Works to or around a Listed Building
 - CLE - A certificate to confirm what the existing use of a property is
 - CLP - A certificate to confirm that a proposed use or development does not require planning permission to be applied for.
 - REG3 - Indicates that the application has been submitted by the Local Authority.

2. Officer reports often refer to a matter or situation as being “a material consideration”. The following list tries to explain what these might include:

Material planning considerations can include (but are not limited to):

- Overlooking/loss of privacy
- Loss of daylight/sunlight or overshadowing
- Scale and dominance
- Layout and density of buildings
- Appearance and design of development and materials proposed
- Disabled persons' access
- Highway safety
- Traffic and parking issues
- Drainage and flood risk
- Noise, dust, fumes etc
- Impact on character or appearance of area
- Effect on listed buildings and conservation areas
- Effect on trees and wildlife/nature conservation
- Impact on the community and other services
- Economic impact and sustainability
- Government policy
- Proposals in the Local Plan
- Previous planning decisions (including appeal decisions)
- Archaeology

There are also concerns that regulations or case law has established cannot be taken into account. These include:

- Who the applicant is/the applicant's background
- Loss of views
- Loss of property value
- Loss of trade or increased competition
- Strength or volume of local opposition
- Construction noise/disturbance during development
- Fears of damage to property
- Maintenance of property
- Boundary disputes, covenants or other property rights
- Rights of way and ownerships disputes over rights of way
- Personal circumstances

Glossary of usual terms

Affordable housing - Housing provided below market price to meet identified needs.

Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) - Area where air quality levels need to be managed.

Apartment-hotel - A use providing basic facilities for self-sufficient living with the amenities of a hotel. Generally classed as C1 (hotels) for planning purposes.

Article 4 Direction - A direction which can be made by the Council to remove normal permitted development rights.

BREEAM - A widely used means of reviewing and improving the environmental performance of generally commercial developments (industrial, retail etc).

Brownfield Land - previously developed land.

Brown roof - A roof surfaced with a broken substrate, e.g. broken bricks.

Building line - The general line along a street beyond which no buildings project.

Bulky goods - Large products requiring shopping trips to be made by car: e.g. DIY or furniture.

CIL - Community Infrastructure Levy. Local authorities in England and Wales levy a charge on new development to be spent on infrastructure to support the development of the area.

Classified Highway Network - The network of main roads, consisting of A, B and C roads.

Conservation Area - areas of special architectural or historic interest designated by the local authority. As designated heritage assets the preservation and enhancement of the area carries great weight in planning permission decisions.

Control of Major Accident Hazards (COMAH) Competent Authority - The Control of Major Accident Hazards Regulations 1999 (COMAH) and their amendments 2005, are the enforcing regulations within the United Kingdom. They are applicable to any establishment storing or otherwise handling large quantities of industrial chemicals of a hazardous nature. Types of establishments include chemical warehousing, chemical production facilities and some distributors.

Dormer Window - Located in the roof of a building, it projects or extends out through the roof, often providing space internally.

Dwelling - A single housing unit - a house, flat, maisonette etc.

Evening Economy A term for the business activities, particularly those used by the public, which take place in the evening such as pubs, clubs, restaurants and arts/cultural uses.

Flood Risk Assessment - A requirement at planning application stage to demonstrate how flood risk will be managed.

Flood Zones - The Environment Agency designates flood zones to reflect the differing risks of flooding. Flood Zone 1 is low probability, Flood Zone 2 is medium probability, Flood Zone 3a is high probability and Flood Zone 3b is functional floodplain.

Granny annexe - A self-contained area within a dwelling house/ the curtilage of a dwelling house but without all the facilities to be self contained and is therefore dependent on the main house for some functions. It will usually be occupied by a relative.

Green roof - A roof with vegetation on top of an impermeable membrane.

Gross floor area - Total floor area of the house, including all floors and garage, measured externally.

Hazardous Substances Consent - Consent required for the presence on, over, or under land of any hazardous substance in excess of controlled quantity.

Historic Parks and Gardens - Parks and gardens of special historic interest, designated by English Heritage.

Housing Association - An independent not-for-profit body that provides low-cost "affordable housing" to meet specific housing needs.

Infrastructure - The basic services and facilities needed for the smooth running of a community.

Lifetime Home - A home which is sufficiently adaptable to allow people to remain in the home despite changing circumstances such as age or disability.

Listed building - Buildings of special architectural or historic interest. Consent is required before works that might affect their character or appearance can be undertaken. They are divided into Grades I, II and II*, with I being of exceptional interest.

Local Plan - The main planning document for a District or Borough.

Luminance - A measure of the luminous intensity of light, usually measured in candelas per square metre.

Major Landscape Feature - these are identified and protected in the Local Plan for being of local significance for their visual and amenity value

Public realm - the space between and within buildings that is publicly accessible, including streets, squares, forecourts, parks and open spaces whether publicly or privately owned.

Scheduled Ancient Monument - Specified nationally important archaeological sites.

Section 106 agreement - A legally binding agreement or obligation entered into by the local authority and a land developer over an issue related to a planning application, under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Sequential approach A method of considering and ranking the suitability of sites for development, so that one type of site is considered before another. Different sequential approaches are applied to different uses.

Sui Generis - A use not specifically defined in the use classes order (2004) - planning permission is always needed to change from a sui generis use.

Sustainable development - Development to improve quality of life and protect the environment in balance with the local economy, for now and future generations.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) - This term is taken to cover the whole range of sustainable approaches to surface water drainage management.

Tree Preservation Order (TPO) - An order made by a local planning authority in respect of trees and woodlands. The principal effect of a TPO is to prohibit the cutting down, uprooting, topping, lopping, wilful damage or wilful destruction of trees without the LPA's consent.

Guide to changes to the Use Classes Order in England.

Changes of use within the same class are not development.

Use	Use Class up to 31 August 2020	Use Class from 1 September 2020
Shop - not more than 280sqm mostly selling essential goods, including food and at least 1km from another similar shop	A1	F.2
Shop	A1	E
Financial & professional services (not medical)	A2	E
Café or restaurant	A3	E
Pub, wine bar or drinking establishment	A4	Sui generis
Takeaway	A5	Sui generis
Office other than a use within Class A2	B1a	E
Research & development of products or processes	B1b	E
For any industrial process (which can be carried out in any residential area without causing detriment to the amenity of the area)	B1c	E
Industrial	B2	B2
Storage or distribution	B8	B8
Hotels, boarding & guest houses	C1	C1
Residential institutions	C2	C2
Secure residential institutions	C2a	C2a
Dwelling houses	C3	C3
Small house in multiple occupation 3-6 residents	C4	C4
Clinics, health centres, creches, day nurseries, day centre	D1	E
Schools, non-residential education & training centres, museums, public libraries, public halls, exhibition halls, places of worship, law courts	D1	F.1
Cinemas, theatres, concert halls, bingo halls and dance halls	D2	Sui generis
Gymnasiums, indoor recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms	D2	E
Hall or meeting place for the principal use of the local community	D2	F.2
Indoor or outdoor swimming baths, skating rinks, and outdoor sports or recreations not involving motorised vehicles or firearms	D2	F.2

Present: Councillor Lovelock (Chair);
Councillors Leng (Vice-Chair), Carnell, Emberson, Ennis, Gavin, Hornsby-Smith, Moore, Page, Robinson, Rowland, Williams and Yeo

RESOLVED ITEMS

91. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2023 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Emberson declared a prejudicial interest in Item 98 on the grounds of predetermination as she was Lead Councillor for Housing.

Councillor Ennis declared a prejudicial interest in Item 98 on the grounds of predetermination as he was Lead Councillor for Adult Social Care.

93. QUESTIONS

Councillor Page asked the following question of the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee:

Loss of income and planning contributions due to prior approvals

Will the Chair update the Committee with the most recent consolidated figures in respect of:

- (1) the number of residential units that have been approved via the Prior Notification Procedure introduced in May 2013 which allows conversions from former offices to residential use?
- (2) the loss in fee income to the Borough Council as a result of this change and the estimated loss to the authority in respect of Section 106 contributions in the form of (a) affordable housing, (b) financial contributions to affordable housing off-site, (c) financial contributions to education and (d) financial contributions to leisure and open spaces.
- (3) Would she summarise the impact of all these changes and the losses to RBC in affordable housing, education and transport and other essential contributions?
- (4) Would she also comment on the implications of the DCLG announcement on 28 November 2014 preventing this, and all other planning authorities, from seeking Section 106 contributions on proposed sites of ten homes or fewer?

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- (5) Lastly, would she update the Committee on the results of recent relevant planning appeals in respect of securing affordable housing contributions from sites of up to 10 dwellings?

REPLY by the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee (Councillor Lovelock):

I thank Councillor Page for his question.

This question relates to the permitted development right first introduced in May 2013 that allows conversion from offices to residential without requiring planning permission, instead relying on a prior approval process under which only a very limited number of matters can be taken into account. The office to residential permitted development right existed up to 2021, when it was subsumed into a more wide-ranging right to convert all commercial uses under new planning use class E, which also include retail, restaurants, light industrial, health centres and indoor sport and fitness uses, to residential.

These permitted development rights are of significant concern to this Council for a wide range of reasons, including the poor quality and small size of accommodation, impacts of noise and poor air quality, loss of important employment land, the health of our high streets and the lack of contribution towards infrastructure and affordable housing. We have strongly objected to these permitted development rights in the past, and recently contributed to the House of Commons Housing, Communities and Local Government Committee inquiry into permitted development rights, which was highly critical of their impact. In November 2021, the Council made a legal direction under Article 4 of the General Permitted Development Order to withdraw this and other associated permitted development rights in parts of Reading including the town centre, our district and local centres, the most important employment and commercial areas and the areas of poorest air quality. This direction came into force in November 2022, after which a planning application is once more required to undertake such changes within the area of the direction. The Secretary of State has powers to modify or cancel the direction but has not yet done so.

This question also relates to changes made to national planning policy that seek to exempt developments of up to 10 dwellings from the need to contribute towards affordable housing and local infrastructure. These changes were originally made by Ministerial Statement on 28th November 2014 and accompanying alterations to Planning Practice Guidance. These changes have subsequently been incorporated into the National Planning Policy Framework, which is the main statement of national policy for planning.

In terms of the specific questions raised:

1. The total number of dwellings that have been approved as conversions from office development or from the new commercial use class through the prior approval process between May 2013 and 1st February 2023 is 2,390. Of these, 1,164 had been completed at the end of March 2022 (the last monitoring exercise), 160 were underway at that point, leaving 784 with outstanding prior approval and not

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started (including those granted since the last monitoring exercise). 282 dwellings were subject to prior approval that has now expired.

2. Since the office to residential permitted development rights were introduced in May 2013, the loss to the Council in terms of planning application fees is £1,689,934. The impact of the removal of the ability to seek financial or in-kind contributions by a Section 106 agreement as a result of the permitted development rights is estimated as follows:
 - a) In terms of on-site affordable housing, the contribution that would have been made can be calculated based on the local policy and approach in place at the time prior approval was granted. It is anticipated that, for those developments which had completed, were under construction or had approval and not yet commenced at 1st February 2023, the total on-site contribution would have been 655 affordable homes.
 - b) For off-site financial contributions towards affordable housing, which would have been required for smaller housing developments, this can be calculated based on the average contribution that relevant developments of this size have already made per dwelling towards affordable housing. On this basis, it is estimated that £2,218,205 would have been secured from those developments which had completed, were under construction or had approval and not yet commenced at 1st February 2023.
 - c) In terms of contributions towards education it should be noted that, since the introduction of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) on 1st April 2015, no Section 106 contributions would have been likely to have been made as these are now primarily covered by the CIL process, and Section 106 agreements would not therefore have been sought. It is estimated that, had those developments permitted under PDR before the introduction of CIL and subsequently implemented been planning applications with relevant Section 106 agreements, the Council would have received £261,755 towards education infrastructure.
 - d) The comments about the impact of CIL relate equally to open space and leisure. It is estimated that, had those developments permitted under PDR before CIL was introduced been planning applications with relevant Section 106 agreements, the Council would have received £1,273,100 towards open space and leisure infrastructure.

It should be noted that the figures in this answer differ somewhat from the answers given to equivalent questions in previous years. This is because a substantial amount of evidence was compiled to form a justification for the Article 4 direction, including a more robust approach to identifying the financial contributions that would have been received.

3. In total, the loss of contributions towards affordable housing and essential infrastructure as a result of this permitted development right is estimated to be

652 affordable homes and financial contributions of £3.753 million, as well as the loss of fee income of £1.690 million.

4. The implications of the 2014 changes to national policy regarding sites of 10 dwellings or less are mainly of relevance to affordable housing, since contributions towards infrastructure such as open space, transport and education have been made through the Community Infrastructure Levy since 2015, and are unaffected by the national policy.

As Committee is aware, Reading Borough Council and West Berkshire Council challenged the changes through the High Court. The case was heard in the High Court in April 2015. The High Court judgement found in favour of the challenge by the local authorities and quashed the amendments to the National Planning Practice Guidance. Committee will recall that an appeal by the Secretary of State was upheld by the Court of Appeal in May 2016 and the Ministerial Statement and the changes to the National Planning Practice Guidance were reinstated.

However, the Court of Appeal did emphasise that “local circumstances may justify lower (or no) thresholds as an exception to the national policy”. It is clear therefore that an authority can seek to demonstrate that local circumstances can be used to justify an exception to national policy. At its meeting in July 2016, Strategic Environment, Planning and Transport Committee decided that the Council should continue to operate Policy DM6 seeking the provision of affordable housing for schemes of 10 or less dwellings, with some qualifications.

Subsequently, the Council prepared a new Local Plan which carried forward the requirement for all sizes of residential development from one dwelling upwards to contribute towards affordable housing. Local plans need to generally comply with national policy. However, during the public examination of the plan, the Council was able to demonstrate that there were exceptional circumstances justifying the local policy approach, and the Planning Inspector agreed in her report that the Local Plan policy H3 was sound. The Local Plan, containing this policy, was adopted on 4th November 2019. The Council’s policy approach has therefore been endorsed through the independent examination process.

The current situation is therefore that the Council continues to operate its local policies seeking provision of affordable housing on sites of one home or more, and has done so for the majority of the time since the initial ministerial statement in 2014.

5. A number of appeals have been made against the Council’s refusal of planning permission or failure to determine planning applications for sites of less than ten dwellings. For all appeals, the Council provides a full case explaining why local circumstances justify the requirement to provide affordable housing, bolstered since 2019 by the adoption of the Local Plan. To date the Council has received 60 decisions relating to affordable housing provision on small sites of which 56 decisions have either been dismissed on grounds including a failure to provide for

affordable housing, or have been allowed but have included a contribution to affordable housing as an exception to national policy.

The last occasion that the Council's position regarding affordable housing on small sites was not supported by a Planning Inspector was in February 2017, which, as previously reported, resulted in an apology from the Planning Inspectorate accepting that the Inspector had not applied himself correctly to the policy framework. In particular since the adoption of the Local Plan, appellants no longer seriously challenge the principle that sites of less than 10 dwellings should contribute to affordable housing in Reading.

Councillor Moore asked the following question of the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee:

Planning Consultation Responses

Planning application letters recently received by residents in Tilehurst regarding planning applications near them have the following piece of text: 'At this present time only consultation responses sent electronically, either by e-mail or submitted online will be accepted'.

Digital exclusion is inextricably linked to wider inequalities in society and is more likely to be faced by those on low incomes, people over 65 and disabled people. An LGA report from November 2021 called out that 'Tackling the digital divide will be crucial to addressing social and economic inequalities and levelling up every community.' Residents in Reading affected by the digital divide should be able to take part in the vital planning process.

Presuming these letters are not just sent to residents of Tilehurst but across the Borough, can I ask that given residents have received a printed letter from the Council regarding a planning application, why can they not reply via a printed or written letter?

REPLY by the Chair of the Planning Applications Committee (Councillor Lovelock):

Thank you for your question.

Officers have looked into the matter raised and it has been confirmed that it was an administrative error that the message excluding comments being sent in by post was still on consultation letters.

This message was attached to letters when officers were working away from the office during the Covid lockdown periods and access to post was not guaranteed or often delayed. It should have been deleted once officers were back at the Civic as the advice about online and emailed comments was only applicable during lockdown and is not a change to our normal practice.

I can confirm that the message was removed from consultation letters as soon as Officers were made aware of the error by your question.

Officers have apologised for not deleting the message before and have confirmed that comments on planning applications can be sent in by post, by using the online forms or by

email. Whichever process is used, it is important to quote the application reference number to ensure that comments reach the correct case officer.

94. POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a schedule of applications to be considered at future meetings of the Committee to enable Councillors to decide which sites, if any, they wished to visit prior to determining the relevant applications, and a list of previously agreed site visits.

It was reported at the meeting that an accompanied site visit for application 221364/FUL - 36-42 London Street, as agreed by the Committee on 11 January 2023, had been omitted from the list of previously agreed site visits. No date for the site visit had yet been set.

Resolved -

That the report and position be noted and no additional applications be the subject of site visits.

95. PLANNING APPEALS

(i) New Appeals

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a schedule giving details of notification received from the Planning Inspectorate regarding six planning appeals, the method of determination for which she had already expressed a preference in accordance with delegated powers, which was attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

(ii) Appeals Recently Determined

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted details of two decisions that had been made by the Secretary of State, or by an Inspector appointed for the purpose, which were attached as Appendix 2 to the report.

(iii) Reports on Appeal Decisions

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the following appeal decision in Appendix 3:

201650/FUL - 111a Watlington Street

Part demolition of existing industrial building and rection of a three storey end of terrace building of 6 flats (C3 use) (amended description).

Written representations.

Appeal dismissed.

Resolved -

- (1) That the new appeals, as set out in Appendix 1, be noted;
- (2) That the outcome of the recently determined appeals, as set out in Appendix 2, be noted;
- (3) That the report on the appeal decision in Appendix 3 be noted.

96. APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report giving details in Table 1 of six prior approval applications received, and in Table 2 of ten applications for prior approval decided, between 20 January and 16 February 2023.

Resolved - That the report be noted.

97. STREET NAME ASSIGNMENT AT STATION HILL DEVELOPMENT

The Executive Director for Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report asking the Committee to select a street name for the new pedestrian pathway around the new development off Station Hill. A plan of the site detailing the street layout was attached at Appendix 1.

The report explained that there was a new building being constructed as part of the Station Hill development and the developers had chosen a name for the building “One Station Hill”, but this was not available as that address was already assigned and in use. The report stated that, following discussion with the developers, it was proposed that a mutually acceptable solution would be to name the new pedestrian pathway around the development “Station Hill Square”, with the new building address being “1, Station Hill Square”.

If the name was not acceptable, alternative names would need to be put forward, along with building address suggestions, for further discussion with the developer and a report would need to come back to a future meeting for a decision.

An error in the report was corrected at the meeting, explaining that it had been Councillors Ayub (not Lovelock), Page and Rowland who had stated during consultation that they were happy with the name “Station Hill Square”.

Resolved - That the new pedestrian pathway be named Station Hill Square.

98. 221405/REG3 - LAND AT BATTLE STREET

Clearance and taking up of existing hardstanding and structures from the site, erection of seven buildings, up to four storeys in height, containing 49 affordable dwellings (Class C3 use), supported living accommodation (Class C2 residential institution use), and older

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persons day centre (Class E(f)), and associated roadways, car parking, open space and other infrastructure.

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which provided additional information on: contamination; trees; SUDs; transport and management of site. It also addressed matters arising from the site visit on 23 February 2023 including: daylight/sunlight impact on Allison Court; Block B design; Battle Street; relationship to surrounding buildings; relationship of blocks and boundary treatment. It recommended some amendments to the conditions, including some renumbering, and an additional condition.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Objector Marie Arndt, Andrew Somerville, planning consultant for the applicant, and Councillor Ennis, as Lead Councillor for Adult Social Care, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

Resolved -

- (1) That the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 unilateral undertaking by 30 April 2023 (unless a later date be agreed by the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services) to secure the Heads of Terms set out in the update report, with the substitution of Victoria Park Playground at Hodsoll Road in place of Beresford Road Playground in the Head of Terms for the Open Space contribution;
- (2) That, in the event of the requirements set out not being met, the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services be authorised to refuse permission;
- (3) That planning permission be subject to the updated conditions and informatives as set out in the update report;
- (4) That the external materials be agreed in consultation with Ward Councillors, particularly in relation to the western walls and Block B;
- (5) That the matters relating to hard and soft landscaping, boundary treatments and landscape management plan, in final conditions numbers (23), (24) and (25), be agreed in consultation with Ward Councillors;
- (6) That, when designing out crime measures as set out in final condition number (37), the possibility of gating the north-south accessway and making it accessible only to residents be considered and investigated, in consultation with Ward Councillors.

(Councillor Emberson declared a prejudicial interest in this item on the grounds of predetermination as she was Lead Councillor for Housing. She left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decision).

(Councillor Ennis declared a prejudicial interest in this item on the grounds of predetermination as he was Lead Councillor for Adult Social Care. He made a statement as Lead Councillor then left the meeting and took no part in the debate or decision).

99. 221576/HOU - 4 DOWNSHIRE SQUARE

The demolition of the single storey side extension, relocation of the dwelling rear door, creation of a new vehicular access and parking area to the north part of the site, with vehicular turntable, existing vehicular access blocked up, replacement low brick wall and piers with metal railings and central front gate to house, including external and landscaping works.

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. An update report was tabled at the meeting which provided information on revised plans and consultee comments received and recommended additional conditions.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Resolved -

That planning permission for application 221576/HOU be granted, subject to the conditions recommended in the original report and the additional conditions recommended in the update report.

100. 221693/FUL - 63 ROWE COURT

Demolition of any remaining fire damaged structure and re-instatement of 63-86 Rowe Court to provide a four storey building, comprising of 24 studios/ one-bed, one person homes, associated car parking, cycle parking, refuse, amenity space and landscaping

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application. It was reported at the meeting that the report incorrectly referred a number of times to Drayton Way and that this should have been Drayton Road.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Objector Robert Maycock and Robert Murch, the applicant's agent, attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

Resolved -

That planning permission for application 221693/FUL be granted, subject to the conditions and informatives as recommended, but with Condition 2 to be amended:

- for the approved plans to be those relating to Option 1, with balconies for all flats, not Option 2; and
- such that, before the installation of the balconies shown on the rear elevation of the proposed building, details of balcony screening, to minimise overlooking onto Osborne Road, shall be provided to the Local Planning Authority.

101. 220922/FUL - 71-73 CAVERSHAM ROAD

Partial demolition of former retail warehouse and erection of a mixed-use building comprising 29 residential units, retail floorspace (Use Class E(a)) at ground floor and associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping (amended description).

The Executive Director of Economic Growth and Neighbourhood Services submitted a report on the above application.

Comments and objections were received and considered.

Ward Councillor Richard Davies attended the meeting and addressed the Committee on this application.

Resolved -

That consideration of application 220922/FUL be deferred for further discussions with the applicant about the residential mix and the tenure split of the affordable housing provision.

(The meeting started at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.52 pm)

READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
Date:	29 MARCH 2023		
TITLE:	POTENTIAL SITE VISITS FOR COMMITTEE ITEMS		
SERVICE:	PLANNING	WARDS:	BOROUGH WIDE
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams	TEL:	0118 9372461
JOB TITLE:	Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)	E-MAIL:	Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To identify those sites where, due to the sensitive or important nature of the proposals, Councillors are advised that a Site Visit would be appropriate before the matter is presented at Committee and to confirm how the visit will be arranged. A list of potential sites is appended to this report with an officer note added to say if recommended for a site visit or not.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you note this report and confirm if the site(s) indicated on the appended list are to be visited by Councillors.
- 2.2 Confirm if there are any other sites Councillors consider necessary to visit before reaching a decision on an application.
- 2.3 Confirm if the site(s) agreed to be visited will be accompanied by officers or unaccompanied.

3. THE PROPOSAL

- 3.1 Appended to this report (appendix 1) is a list of applications received that may be presented to Committee for a decision in due course. Officers will normally indicate if a site would benefit from being visited to inform your decision making or Councillors may request that a site is visited.
- 3.2 A site visit will help if the impact of the proposed development is difficult to visualise from the plans and supporting material or where concerns raised by objectors need to be seen to be better understood.
- 3.3 While officers try to make site visit recommendations before a report comes to Committee sometimes, during consideration of an application, Councillors may request a deferral to allow a visit to be carried out to assist in reaching the correct decision.
- 3.4 Accompanied site visits are appropriate when access to private land is necessary to view the site and to appreciate matters raised. These visits will be arranged and attended by officers on the designated date and time.

Applicants and objectors may observe the process and answer questions when asked but lobbying is discouraged. A site visit is an information gathering opportunity to inform decision making.

3.5 Unaccompanied site visits are appropriate when the site can be easily seen from public areas and allow Councillors to visit when convenient to them. In these instances, the case officer will provide a briefing note on the application and the main issues to assist when visiting the site.

3.6 It is also possible for officers to suggest, or Councillors to request, a visit to a completed development to assess its quality.

3.7 Appendix 2 sets out a list of application sites that have been agreed to be visited at previous committee meetings but are still to be arranged.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

4.1 The processing of planning applications contributes to creating a sustainable environment with active communities and helping the economy within the Borough as identified as the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan:

1. Healthy Environments
2. Thriving Communities
3. Inclusive Economy

5. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

5.1 Statutory neighbour consultation takes place on planning applications.

6. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

6.1 Officers when assessing an application and when making a recommendation to the Committee, will have regard to its duties Under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

7.1 None arising from this report.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

8.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers). The Planning Service uses policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly by making efficient use of land and using sustainable materials and building methods.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 The cost of site visits is met through the normal planning service budget and Councillor costs.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Reading Borough Council Planning Code of Conduct.

APPENDIX 1

Potential Site Visit List:

None.

APPENDIX 2

Previously Agreed Site Visits with date requested:

- 220189 - 205-213 Henley Road - arranged for 23.03.23
- 220409 - Caversham Park - date pending
- 221345 - Curzon Club, 362 Oxford Road - agreed by PAC 7.12.22 to be Unaccompanied
- 221364 - Central Club, 36-42 London Street

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READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	29 MARCH 2023		
TITLE:	PLANNING APPEALS		
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams	TEL:	0118 9372461
JOB TITLE:	Planning Manager	E-MAIL:	Julie.Williams@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To report notifications received from the Planning Inspectorate on the status of various planning appeals.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you note the appeals received and the method of determination as listed in Appendix 1 of this report.
- 2.2 That you note the appeals decided as listed in Appendix 2 of this report.
- 2.3 That you note the Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions provided in Appendix 3 of this report.

3. INFORMATION PROVIDED

- 3.1 Please see Appendix 1 of this report for new appeals lodged since the last committee.
- 3.2 Please see Appendix 2 of this report for new appeals decided since the last committee.
- 3.3 Please see Appendix 3 of this report for new Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions since the last committee.

4. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 4.1 Defending planning appeals made against planning decisions contributes to creating a sustainable environment with active communities and helping the economy within the Borough as identified as the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan:

1. Healthy Environments
2. Thriving Communities
3. Inclusive Economy

5. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 5.2 The Planning Service uses policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly by making efficient use of land and using sustainable materials and building methods. As a team we have also reduced the amount of resources (paper and printing) we use to carry out our work.

6. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

- 6.1 Planning decisions are made in accordance with adopted local development plan policies, which have been adopted by the Council following public consultation. Statutory consultation also takes place on planning applications and appeals, and this can have bearing on the decision reached by the Secretary of State and his Inspectors. Copies of appeal decisions are held on the public Planning Register.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 Where appropriate the Council will refer in its appeal case to matters connected to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—
- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 Public Inquiries are normally the only types of appeal that involve the use of legal representation. Only applicants have the right to appeal against refusal or non-determination and there is no right for a third party to appeal a planning decision.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Public Inquiries and Informal Hearings are more expensive in terms of officer and appellant time than the Written Representations method. Either party can be liable to awards of costs. Guidance is provided in Circular 03/2009 “Cost Awards in Appeals and other Planning Proceedings”.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Planning Appeal Forms and letters from the Planning Inspectorate.

APPENDIX 1

Appeals Lodged:

WARD: BATTLE
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/22/3310834
CASE NO: 220776
ADDRESS: "Land at", 362 Oxford Road,
PROPOSAL: Erection of a mixed-use development comprising of two
commercial units on the ground floor (157.5 sqm), 26
residential units, associated landscaping, car and cycle
parking.
CASE OFFICER: Tom Bradfield
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: Refusal of Planning Permission
APPEAL LODGED: 27/ 2/2023

WARD: CHURCH
APPEAL NO: APP/E0345/W/22/3313373
CASE NO: 220381
ADDRESS: 15 Highmead Close
PROPOSAL: Conversion of single dwelling to two dwellings
CASE OFFICER: David Brett
METHOD: Written Representation
APPEAL TYPE: Refusal of Planning Permission
APPEAL LODGED: 27/ 2/2023

APPENDIX 2

Appeals Decided: None.

APPENDIX 3

Address Index of Planning Officers reports on appeal decisions.

None available this time.

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REPORT BY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	29 MARCH 2023		
TITLE:	APPLICATIONS FOR PRIOR APPROVAL		
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams		
JOB TITLE:	Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)	E-MAIL:	Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of the types of development that can be submitted for Prior Approval and to provide a summary of the applications received and decisions taken in accordance with the prior-approval process as set out in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order (GPDO 2015) as amended.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you note the report.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 There are a range of development types and changes of use that can be carried out as permitted development but are subject to the developer first notifying the planning authority of the proposal, for it to confirm that “prior approval” is not needed before exercising the permitted development rights. The matters for prior approval vary depending on the type of development and these are set out in full in the relevant Parts in Schedule 2 to the General Permitted Development Order. A local planning authority cannot consider any other matters when determining a prior approval application.
- 3.2 If the decision is that approval is required, further information may be requested by the planning authority in order for it to determine whether approval should be given. The granting of prior approval can result in conditions being attached to the approval. Prior approval can also be refused, in which case an appeal can be made.
- 3.3 The statutory requirements relating to prior approval are much less prescriptive than those relating to planning applications. This is because seeking prior approval is designed to be a light-touch process given that the principle of the development has already been established in the General Permitted Development Order. The government is clear that a local planning authority should not impose unnecessarily onerous requirements on developers should not seek to replicate the planning application system.
- 3.4 However, this means that large development schemes, often involving changes of use to residential, can proceed without meeting many of the adopted planning policies; such as making no contribution towards affordable housing, and the application fees for these “light touch” applications are significantly less than the equivalent planning application fee.
- 3.5 For this reason, at the Planning Applications Committee meeting on 29 May 2013, it was agreed that a report be brought to future meetings to include details of applications received for prior approval, those pending a decision and those

applications which have been decided since the last Committee date. It was also requested that an estimate be provided for the “loss” in potential planning fee income.

4 TYPES OF PRIOR APPROVAL APPLICATIONS

4.1 The categories of development requiring prior approval appear in different parts of Schedule 2 of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England) Order 2015, or amended by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development)(England)(Amendment) Order. Those that are of most relevance to Reading Borough are summarised as follows:

SCHEDULE 2 - Permitted development rights

PART 1 - Development within the curtilage of a dwelling house

- **Householder development - larger home extensions.** Part 2 Class A1.
- **Householder development - upwards extensions.** Part 2 Class AA.

PART 3 – Changes of use

- **Change of use from A1 shops or A2 financial & professional, betting office, pay day loan shop or casino to A3 restaurants and cafes.** Class C.
- **Change of use from A1 shops or A2 financial & professional, betting office or pay day loan shop to Class D2 assembly & leisure.** Class J.
- **Change of use from A1 shops or A2 financial and professional or a mixed use of A1 or A2 with dwellinghouse to Class C3 dwellinghouse.** Class M
- **Change of use from an amusement arcade or a casino to C3 dwellinghouse & necessary works.** Class N
- **Change of use from B1 office to C3 dwellinghouse** Class O*.
- **Change of use from B8 storage or distribution to C3 dwellinghouse** Class P
- **Change of use from B1(c) light industrial use to C3 dwellinghouse** Class PA*
- **Change of use from agricultural buildings and land to Class C3 dwellinghouses and building operations reasonably necessary to convert the building to the C3 use.** Class Q.
- **Change of use of 150 sq m or more of an agricultural building (and any land within its curtilage) to flexible use within classes A1, A2, A3, B1, B8, C1 and D2.** Class R.
- **Change of use from Agricultural buildings and land to state funded school or registered nursery D1.** Class S.
- **Change of use from B1 (business), C1 (hotels), C2 (residential institutions), C2A (secure residential institutions and D2 (assembly and leisure) to state funded school D1.** Class T.

PART 4 - Temporary buildings and uses

- **Temporary use of buildings for film making for up to 9 months in any 27 month period.** Class E

PART 11 - Heritage & Demolition

- **Demolition of buildings.** Class B.

PART 16 - Communications

- **Development by telecommunications code system operators.** Class A
- GPDO Part 11.

PART 20 - Construction of New Dwellinghouses

- **New dwellinghouses on detached blocks of flats** Class A
- **Demolition of buildings and construction of new dwellinghouses in their place.** Class ZA

4.2 Those applications for Prior Approval received and yet to be decided are set out in the appended Table 1 and those applications which have been decided are set out in the appended Table 2. The applications are grouped by type of prior approval

application. Information on what the estimated equivalent planning application fees would be is provided.

4.3 It should be borne in mind that the planning considerations to be taken into account in deciding each of these types of application are specified in more detail in the GDPO. In some cases the LPA will first need to confirm whether or not prior approval is required before going on to decide the application on its planning merits where prior approval is required.

4.4 Details of any appeals on prior-approval decision will be included elsewhere in the agenda.

5. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

5.1 Changes of use brought about through the prior approval process are beyond the control or influence of the Council's adopted policies and Supplementary Planning Documents. Therefore, it is not possible to confirm how or if these schemes will contribute to the strategic aims of the Council.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

6.2 The Planning Service uses policies to encourage developers to build and use properties responsibly by making efficient use of land and using sustainable materials and building methods. As a team we have also reduced the amount of resources (paper and printing) we use to carry out our work.

7. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

7.1 Statutory consultation takes place in connection with applications for prior-approval as specified in the Order discussed above.

8 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

8.1 Where appropriate the Council must have regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

8.2 There are no direct implications arising from the proposals.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 None arising from this Report.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Since the additional prior notifications were introduced in May 2013 in place of applications for full planning permission, the loss in fee income is now estimated to be £1,871,669.

(Class E (formally office) Prior Approvals - £1,689,934:
Householder Prior Approvals - £89,802:
Retail Prior Approvals - £16,840:
Demolition Prior Approval - £5,795:
Storage Prior Approvals - £5716:
Shop to Restaurant/Leisure Prior Approval - £6331;
Light Industrial to Residential - £20,022:
Dwellings on detached block of flats - £2048:
Additional storey on dwellings - £206:
New dwellinghouses on terrace/detached buildings - £17,483.
Demolition of buildings and construction of new dwelling - £128;
Prior approval to mixed use including flats - £2484.

Figures since last report

Householder Prior Approvals - £770;
Class E (formally office) Prior Approvals - £0

- 10.2 However it should be borne in mind that the prior notification application assessment process is simpler than would have been the case for full planning permission and the cost to the Council of determining applications for prior approval is therefore proportionately lower. It should also be noted that the fee for full planning applications varies by type and scale of development and does not necessarily equate to the cost of determining them.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015
- The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) (Amendment) Order 2016.

Table 1 - Applications received since 16th February 2023 to 17th March 2023

Type:	How many received since last report:	Loss in possible fee income:
Householder Prior Approvals	7	£770
Class E Prior Approvals	0	0
Demolition Prior Approval	0	0
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	2	n/a
Prior Notification	0	n/a
Telecommunications Prior Approval	2	n/a
Dwellings on detached block of flats	0	0
Householder Additional Storey	0	0
New dwellinghouses on terrace/detached buildings	0	0
Demolition of buildings and construction of new dwelling	0	0
Prior approval to mixed use including flats	0	0
TOTAL	11	£770

Table 2 - Applications decided since 16th February 2023 to 17th March 2023

Type:	Approved	Refused	Not Required	Withdrawn	Non Determination
Householder Prior Approvals	0	0	3	0	0
Class E Prior Approvals	0	1	0	1	0
Demolition Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Solar Equipment Prior Approval	0	0	0	0	0
Prior Notification/ Other	0	0	0	0	0
Telecommunications Prior Approval	0	3	0	0	0
Dwellings on detached block of flats	0	0	0	0	0
Householder Additional Storey	0	0	0	0	0
New dwellings on terrace buildings or New dwellings on detached buildings	0	0	0	0	0
Demolition of buildings and construction of new dwelling	0	0	0	0	0
Prior approval to mixed use including flats	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	0	4	3	1	0

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29 March 2023

Ward: Abbey

Address: 84 Broad Street, Reading, RG1 2AP

Proposal: To add 84 Broad Street to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures

RECOMMENDATION

That 84 Broad Street be added to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

1.1 To report on a proposal to add 84 Broad Street to the List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures.

1.2 Appendices:

Appendix 1: Location map

Appendix 2: Relevant photos and images

Appendix 3: Proposed Local List text

Appendix 4: Nomination form

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 Reading Borough Council maintains a List of Locally-Important Buildings and Structures ('the Local List'). Its purpose is to recognise the buildings and structures which do not meet the criteria for national listing, but are nonetheless significant to the heritage of the local area. It was agreed by Planning Applications Committee on 2nd December 2020 that decisions on additions to the Local List should be made at PAC.

2.2 A nomination was received on 13th April 2021 to add 84 Broad Street to the Local List. Consultations have been carried out in accordance with the agreed process, and this report sets out the recommended action.

2.3 The nominated heritage item is adjacent to a group of late Victorian Commercial properties, with shops on the ground floor and residential/commercial on the upper floors, which are a part of the Broad Street commercial shopping centre.

2.4 The nomination form received for the building identifies the significance of the building as follows:

84 Broad Street, is a three storey brick building built c.1868, about the same time as 85-88 Broad Street, as a larger and more imposing shop. The brick street façade remains substantially intact, and the second storey still retains the original timber double hung, four pane windows. (Refer to recent street photos in Annex 2.)

Historic Interest

(b) Social Importance

It is part of a group of commercial/residential properties, erected for named Broad Street shop owners. The architect was J T & W Brown, who in 1868 designed and built on this property. He was also responsible for 85-88 Broad Street, which were constructed about the same time. The patron for 84 was Salmon the butcher. This is a larger and more imposing shop that should be included for its individual and group value with 85-88. (see Sidney Gold in sources).

In 1882 additions and alterations were made for Joseph Noad by William Ravenscroft. The brick frontage has been painted. However, the facade and arrangement of windows on the first and second floors (if not the window frames) and cornice appear to be original. The chimney pots to the west are still in place.

The building has played an influential role in the development of shops along Broad Street, and as such played a key social role in Reading.

(b) Innovation and Virtuosity

ii. Architectural Interest

The building or structure is the work of a notable local architect.

84 Broad Street was originally designed by a well-known local firm of architects J T & W Brown. Other projects by this firm included: Suttons Seeds (lecture hall, buildings and coffee shop 1871, Market Place buildings 1872); public house for Berkshire Brewery on Hosier Street (1865), Villa for Mr Chancellor on Redlands Estate (1869).

The row of terraces to the east including:

- *Hiscock at No 86 and previously No 78. Batho occupied No 88 in 1865 but by 1888 was at No 85;*
- *Batho (at No 85): Shop & House - (1868) (Builder 7 Nov 1868 tenders - Clacey);*
- *Hiscock (at No 86?) Hiscock were at No 78 in 1865 but in 1883 E J Nicolle took over Hiscock's business (Reading Observer 14 July 1883) with an address of 86 Broad Street.;*
- *Shop & House 1868 (Builder 7 Nov 1868 tenders - Sheppard);*
- *Awmack (at No 87): House - (1869);*

Group Value

Unified architectural value

Generally, the original design of the group of the shopping parade is still visible. Refer to Annexure 2, the Goad insurance map, 1885 James Gafford sketches and recent street photos.

The rear of the properties to the south are visible from St Marys service area.

Town Planning

84 Broad Street is an important contributory element, of a purpose built parade of shops dating from c1868. The shops have been marked on an 1879 OS map extract, which is the closest to the date of construction.

There is circumstantial evidence that it was a 'modern' replacement for an existing parade of shops that were redeveloped following the retirement of W H Prestwich, photographer. W H Prestwich occupied 3 units 85-87 in 1865.

No 84 (a taller building) was built for R F Salmon (butchers) and he moved there the press notice described it a '84 New Buildings, Broad Street'.

Townscape Value

The property is part of a group of late 19th century commercial shops and residential above. It appears in some sketches from 1885. The current photos clearly show it is an import component of a group of shops dating from the late 1860s. (see photo). 84 Broad Street is part of an important group of buildings/properties and are the oldest section of the western end of Broad Street.

3. RESULTS OF CONSULTATION

3.1 The following were consulted on the proposed addition to the Local List:

- Landowner;
- Ward councillors;
- Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee; and
- Reading Civic Society.

3.2 Responses were received from ward councillors and Reading Civic Society.

3.3 Abbey ward councillors

Responses from the local councillors in support of the listing were received in February 2023.

3.4 Reading Civic Society

The committee of Reading Civic Society has reviewed, and supports, 84 Broad Street being added to the Local List.

3.3 No response has been received from the landowner.

3.4 Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee made the initial nomination and therefore did not make any further comment on the proposal for local listing.

4. ASSESSMENT

4.0.1 The proposal to add a building or structure to the Local List should be considered against the criteria in Appendix 2 of the Reading Borough Local Plan (adopted 2019).

4.1 Exclusions

4.1.1 The Local Plan specifies that a building should not be considered for the Local List where it is already part of a conservation area, scheduled monument or subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest. 84 Broad Street is not within any of these existing designations and can therefore be considered against the other criteria.

4.2 General principles

- 4.2.1 84 Broad Street dates from c.1868, and therefore needs to be considered against the following general principle:

b. 1840-1913: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance.

84 Broad Street fits within the selected dates of Council's Local Listing. Although some of the windows and shopfront have changed, the building is still clearly recognisable from sketches made in 1885 in terms of scale, materials and general form. The brick street façade remains substantially intact and the second storey still retains the original timber double hung, four pane windows. As is usually the case with nominations for local listing, the interior has not been inspected and no comment is therefore made on the extent of internal alterations.

4.3 Significance

- 4.3.1 To be added to the Local List, a building or structure must fulfil at least one of the defined significance criteria, which fall into two categories - historic interest and architectural interest. These are assessed below.

4.3.2 Historic Interest

a. Historical Association

i. The building or structure has a well authenticated historical association with a notable person(s) or event.

ii. The building or structure has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest.

The building is designed by a well-known firm of local architects, J. T. & W. Brown. They date from approximately the same time as 85-88 Broad Street, by the same local firm, which were added to the local list on 12th January 2022, in part due to the historical association with this architectural firm. The nomination form identified other projects by this firm as including buildings for Suttons Seeds (lecture hall, buildings and coffee shop 1871, Market Place buildings 1872), a public house for Berkshire Brewery on Hosier Street (1865) and a villa for Mr Chancellor on Redlands Estate (1869).

Additions were also made in 1882 by local architect William Ravenscroft (1848-1943). Ravenscroft designed a number of local late Victorian buildings in the local area, including a number of buildings on the national list. These include Chiltern Court at 37 St Peter's Avenue, Caversham; the Great Hall of the University of Reading on London Road; Stable Cottages in Tidmarsh; and a group of cottages at Maidenhatch near Pangbourne. Other significant buildings in Reading include buildings and structures in Palmer Park, including the locally listed Palmer Park Pavilion, and the former Central Boys School (now part of Katesgrove Primary School), whilst Ravenscroft was also responsible for a number of arts and crafts houses and buildings elsewhere in England.

4.3.3 *b. Social Importance*

The building or structure has played an influential role in the development of an area or the life of one of Reading's communities. Such buildings/structures may include places of worship, schools, community buildings, places of employment, public houses and memorials, which formed a focal point or played a key social role.

The building is part of the evolution and development of the shops along Broad Street in the historic commercial centre of Reading. Today it still makes a prominent and important contribution to the remaining local buildings and shops in this area.

Together with 85-88 Broad Street which are already on the Local List, this group of Victorian commercial terraces are (apart from the George Hotel, which dates from the 16th century and is sited at the eastern end of the central shopping precinct) one of the oldest groupings of buildings in the central shopping area along Broad Street, dating from the late 19th century.

4.3.4 Architectural Interest

a. *Sense of place*

i. The building or structure is representative of a style that is characteristic of Reading.

This is a good example of late 19th century (c.1860s/1870s) commercial, three storey building along the high street, with shops on the ground floor and living accommodation above. It is a larger and more imposing shop building than the similar period buildings to the east at 85-88 Broad Street, and is a different style from other neighbouring late Victorian buildings, which were built c.1900 and Edwardian pre-WWI buildings in the area.

4.3.5 b. *Innovation and virtuosity*

i. The building or structure has a noteworthy quality of workmanship and materials.

84 Broad Street is not considered to fulfil this criterion.

ii. The building or structure is the work of a notable local/national architect/engineer/builder.

See 4.3.2 regarding the architect

4.3.6 c. *Group value*

i. The buildings/structures form a group which as a whole has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area.

The group of terraces makes an important contribution to the historic streetscape of the south-western end of Broad Street shopping precinct. Although of a distinct scale and form, it forms part of a group of buildings by the same architect along with the already locally-listed 85-88 Broad Street.

ii. The buildings/structures are an example of deliberate town planning from before 1947.

84 Broad Street is not considered to fulfil this criterion.

4.4 Conclusion of assessment

4.4.1 84 Broad Street qualifies for addition to the Local List because it:

- Is not within a conservation area, scheduled monument or area subject to an Article 4 direction relating to historic or architectural interest;
- Dates from between 1840 and 1913 and is of clearly-defined significance in the local context and elements that contribute to its heritage significance remain substantially complete;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its historical association;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its social importance;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its sense of place;
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its innovation and virtuosity; and
- Contributes to the heritage of the Borough in terms of its group value.

4.4.2 A description of the significance of the building for inclusion in the Local List is included in Appendix 3.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Local listing of buildings and structures, where it leads to the retention of those buildings or structures, can help to address the climate emergency by negating the need for demolition and new development, which are processes that use significant amounts of energy and result in emissions.

7. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 It is not expected that there will be any significant adverse impacts on specific groups due to race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age or religious belief as a result of the recommendations of this report.

8. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

8.1 Addition to the Local List is not a statutory process, and there are no legal implications of the recommendations of this report.

9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

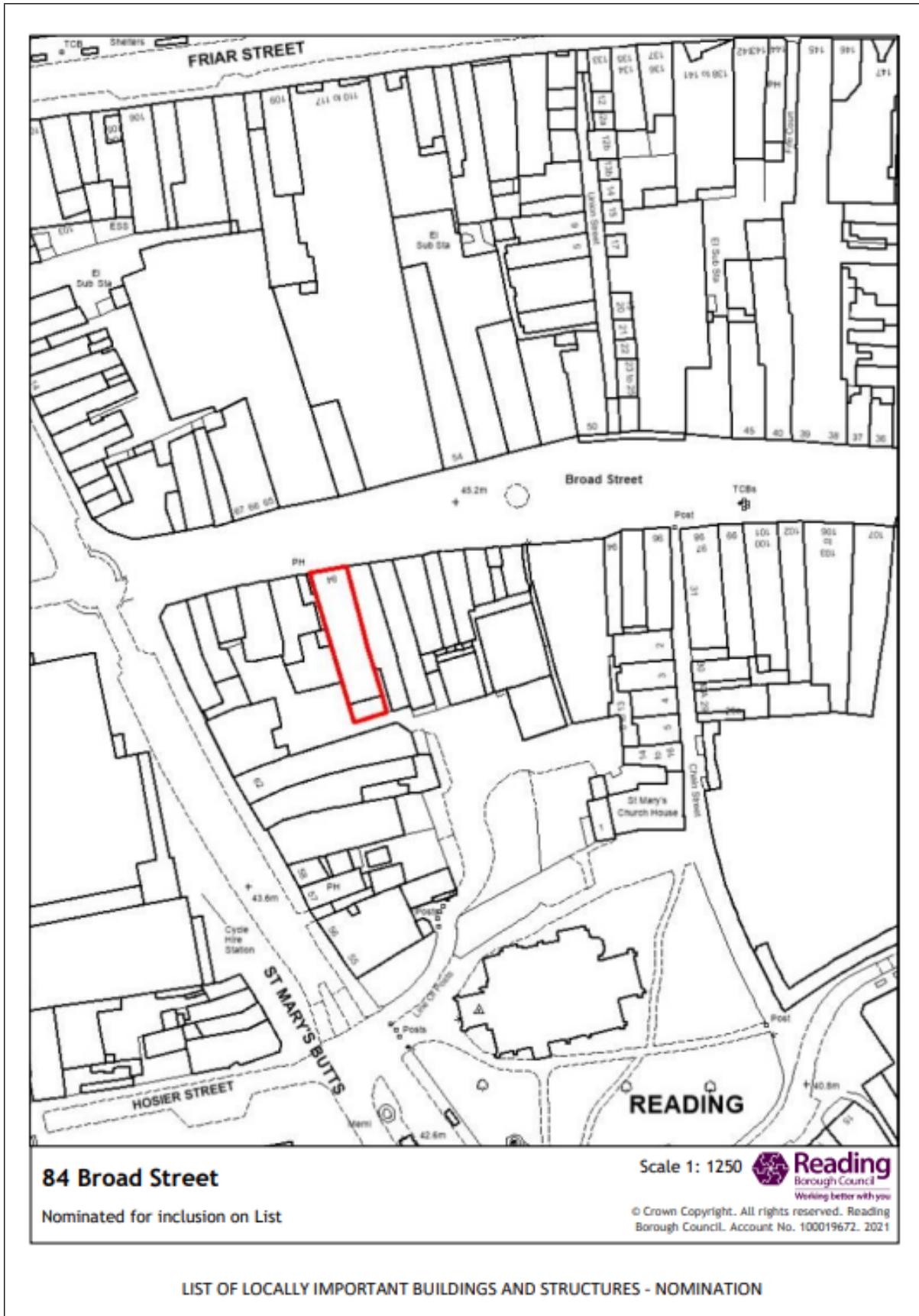
9.1 Consideration of this nomination and any resulting amendments to the Local List will be accommodated within existing budgets.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

10.1 Reading Borough Local Plan (Adopted November 2019)

Bruce Edgar IHBC, Conservation and Urban Design Officer

APPENDIX 1: LOCATION PLAN



APPENDIX 2: RELEVANT PHOTOGRAPHS AND ILLUSTRATIONS

Fig. 1: Photo, c. 1905 (Source Reading Library)



Fig. 2: 84 Broad Street on the right.

The shop front has had alterations over time, like 95% of the other shops, but it still has significant features seen in earlier sketches from c.1885. It still has the original exterior brick walls and fenestration openings on the first and second floors, and the upper floor still has its original 4-pane, double-hung timber windows. (Fig. 6).



Fig. 3: 84 Broad Street. Source: RBC Photo, February 2023.



Fig. 4: Aerial 2013



Fig. 5: OS c.1875, Pub. 1879. Broad Street, Reading.
 This is the first map, after the plots were built on.

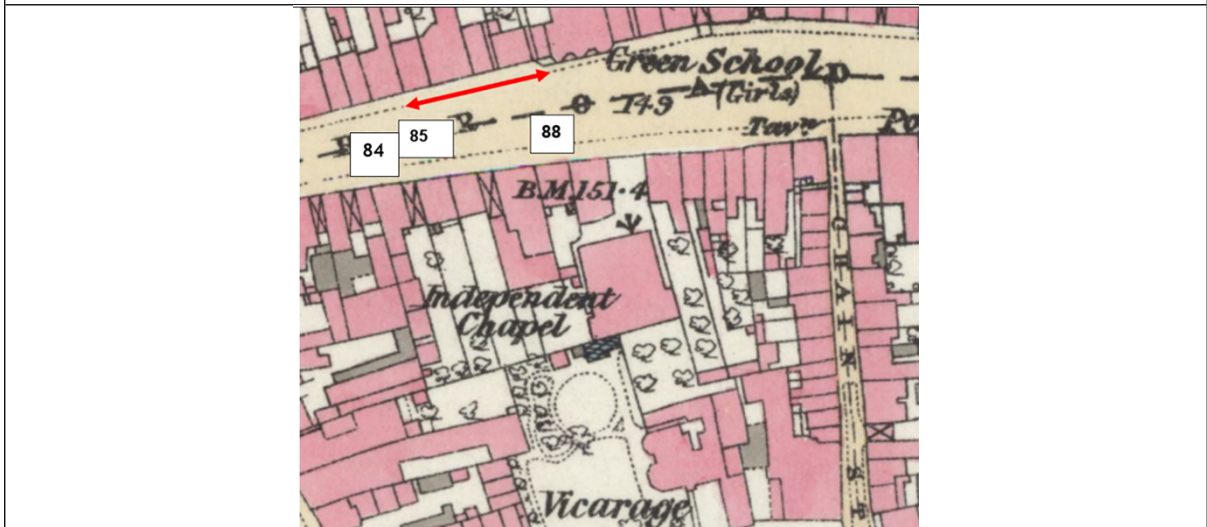


Fig. 6: Composition of a late c.1885 James Gafford sketch,
 (Reading Library collection, Showing original Design of 84 to 88 Broad Street)

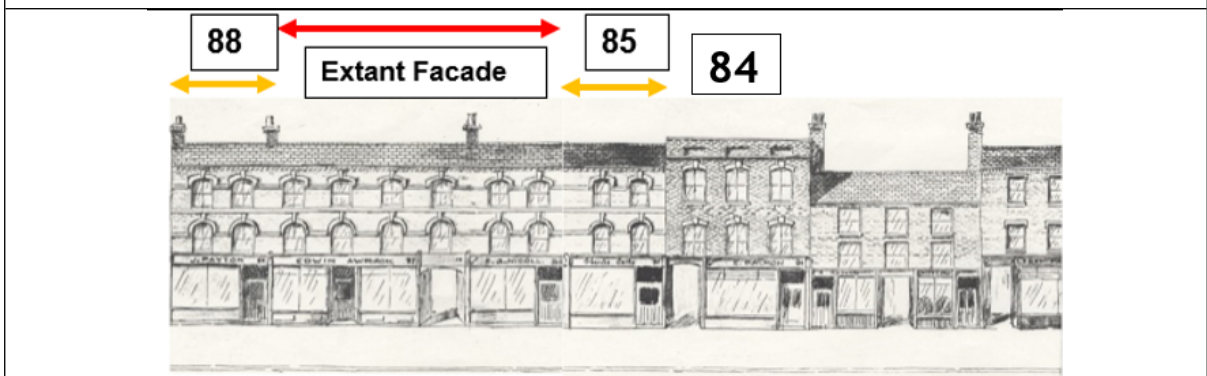


Fig. 7: Goad Map 1895



APPENDIX 3: PROPOSED LOCAL LIST TEXT

84 Broad Street is part of a purpose-built parade of shops dating from c.1868. The shops have been marked on the 1879 OS map extract which is the closest to the date of construction. Within central Reading it is a rare example from the later part of 19th century (c. 1860/70s) of commercial shops and residences above early high street properties in Reading.

The architect J T & W Brown 1868 was also responsible for 85-88 Broad Street, which form a separate entry on the Local List, constructed about the same time. The patron for 84 was Salmon the butcher. This is a larger and more imposing shop that is included for its individual value as well as its and group value with 85-88.

In 1882 additions and alterations were made for Joseph Noad by another important architect, William Ravenscroft, who is responsible for a number of nationally listed buildings as well as other buildings on the Local List.

The brick frontage has been painted. The façade on the first and second storey retain the original openings and the second storey still has the original timber frames and 4 panel glazed windows. It has a shallow parapet above the second storey. The chimney pots to the west are still in place.

APPENDIX 4: NOMINATION FORM

Assessment form for locally listing buildings in Reading Borough November 2012

CRITERIA AND CONSIDERATION FOR LOCALLY LISTING BUILDINGS AND STRUCTURES IN READING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Background and explanation: Heritage assets cannot be replaced once lost. They include both nationally and locally listed buildings. Harm to an asset's significance can cause a loss of value to society and a loss of public benefit.

The criteria for assessment of locally listing buildings/ structures are set out below and are taken from the adopted Sites and Detailed Policies Document. These criteria and the accompanying explanation of how a particular building or structure meets these criteria will be used to assess whether that building or structure merits designation as a locally listed heritage asset.

The assessment will be based purely on the evidence provided with this form (unless the authority has access to further evidence).

Identification of buildings or structures for local listing: Buildings or structures worthy of being locally listed will mainly be identified through the process of considering and determining planning proposals and applications.¹

Exclusions

Buildings and structures will not be considered for the Local List when they are already part of a Conservation Area², Scheduled Monument, or subject to an article 4 direction relating to historical or architectural interest.

Address of building/ structure: 84 Broad Street

Postcode: RG1 2AP

¹ Buildings or structures identified outside the application process will be considered as resources become available.

² Buildings that warrant local designation in a conservation area are awarded a 'Buildings of Townscape Merit' designation. For the purposes of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, 2012), Buildings of Townscape Merit will be considered to warrant conservation and where appropriate enhancement in accordance with the NPPF.

Selection for the Local List

For any building, structure or group of buildings to be included in the Local List it must clearly meet the relevant age and integrity criteria:

	Please tick relevant box ³
(a) pre-1840: Any building, structure or group of buildings where its/ their style, form and construction are easily identifiable.	
(b) 1840 - 1913: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are substantially complete and unaltered and of definite significance.	√
(c) 1914 - 1939: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are substantially complete and unaltered and of a high level of significance.	
(d) post 1939: Any building, structure or group of buildings that is/are of exceptional significance and wholly complete and unaffected by inappropriate changes.	

Please provide comments/ further explanation of above:

The architect J T & W Brown 1868 who also was also responsible for 85-88 Broad Street, constructed about the same time. The patron for 84 was Salmon the butcher. This is a larger and more imposing shop that should be included for its individual and group value with 85-88.

In 1882 additions and alterations were made for Joseph Noad by William Ravenscroft.

The brick frontage has been painted. However the facade and arrangement of windows on the first and second floors (if not the window frames) and cornice appear to be original. The chimney pots to the west are still in place.

³ Note - if none of the above boxes are ticked, the building/ structure will not qualify for consideration as a locally listed building.

In addition it must also be shown that it contributes to the character of an area and is valued by local people in accordance with at least one of the criteria detailed below under the headings of historic interest, architectural interest and townscape value.

Historic interest

Please tick the relevant box/es

(a) Historical Association i. The building or structure has a well authenticated historical association with a notable person(s) or event.	
ii. The building or structure has a prolonged and direct association with figures or events of local interest.	
(b) Social Importance The building or structure has played an influential role in the development of an area or the life of one of Reading's communities. Such buildings/structures may include places of worship, schools, community buildings, places of employment, public houses and memorials which formed a focal point or played a key social role.	√
(c) Industrial Importance The building or structure clearly relates to traditional or historic industrial processes or important businesses or the products of such industrial processes or businesses in the history of Reading or are intact industrial structures, for example bridges	

Comments/ further explanation of this should be provided in the box at the end of this section.

Architectural interest

(a) Sense of place i. The building or structure is representative of a style that is characteristic of Reading.	
(b) Innovation and Virtuosity i. The building or structure has a noteworthy quality of workmanship and materials.	
ii. The building or structure is the work of a notable local/national architect/engineer/builder.	√
iii. The building or structure shows innovation in materials, technique, architectural style or engineering	
(c) Group Value i. The buildings/structures form a group which as a whole has a unified architectural or historic value to the local area.	√

ii. The buildings/structures are an example of deliberate town planning from before 1947	√
--	---

Comments/ further explanation of this should be provided in the box at the end of this section.

Townscape Value

The buildings/structures have prominence and a landmark quality that is fundamental to the sense of place of a particular locality.	
---	--

Please provide comments/ further explanation of above

Historic Interest

(b) Social Importance

No 84 forms part of a terrace of shops was built for named Broad Street shop owners, in this case Salmon the butcher (see Sidney Gold in sources).

In the notice in the local press R F Salmon announced that the business was moving to '84 New Buildings' Broad Street. The business had been established in 1827 and in 1882 (which was after the death of R F Salmon when it was known as E H Salmon) it moved two doors away to 'larger premises at 81-82'.

Chemist, Joseph Noad, then took over the shop. By 1888 Tunbridge & Wright were chemists at the premises and in a photograph c1905 it was branded as the Central Drug Store (see below).

Architectural Interest

b(ii) Architect

Designed by a well-known local firm of architects J T & W Brown. Other patrons included: Suttons Seeds (lecture hall, buildings and coffee shop 1871, Market Place buildings 1872); public house for Berkshire Brewery on Hosier Street (1865), Villa for Mr Chancellor on Redlands Estate (1869).

The additions for Joseph Noad in 1882 were by William Ravenscroft another well known local architect responsible for Broad Oak, Upper Redlands Road (1876), 2 shops for Mr T Paget on Gun Street (1882/84) and parts of Katesgrove School 1890/92).

The premises are three windows wide and there was once a side alley on the east to the rear. The rear of the property is visible from St Marys service area.

c (i) Group Value

Taken together with 85-88, by the same architect, the property is part of a purpose built parade of 1868.

C (ii) Town Planning

The shop adjoins and is by the same architect as 85-88 Broad Street a purpose built parade of shops dating from 1868.

There is circumstantial evidence that it was a 'modern' replacement for an existing parade of shops that were redeveloped following the retirement of W H Prestwich, photographer. W H Prestwich occupied 3 units 85-87 in 1865. In 1870 he sold his negatives and business to Mr S V White of 52 Castle Street.

The shops have been marked on the 1879 OS map extract which is the closest to the date of construction.

Recommendation made by (name of Proposer) : Evelyn Williams, Chair Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Date : 13 April 2021






General notes and any other relevant information on the building/ structure by Proposer ⁴ making recommendation for local listing including reasons for recommendation ⁵

Source of all information and details of any supporting document used to support the recommendation to locally list the building or structure ⁶ .	
Detail of evidence/ document (including photographs)	Source/ reference of information
Architects and patrons for the shops	Sidney Gold. A biographical Dictionary of Architects at Reading
R F Salmon new shop at 84 Broad Street.	Reading Mercury 5 December 1868
Plan in 1895 - Appendix	Attached separate document
Plan in 1853 - Appendix	Attached separate document (indicative only when BRO re-opens a better colour copy can be obtained).
OS Map 1879 - Appendix	Attached separate document - closest map to date of construction.

⁴ The 'Proposer' is anticipated to normally be the Planning Case Officer given that the identification of most buildings or structures will currently be identified through the process of determining planning applications, however, the 'Proposer' could also be a member of the public or another organisation' group.

⁵ Failure to meet the requirements for a building or structure to be locally listed at a particular point in time does not rule out future re-consideration of that building or structure if significant new evidence is produced.

⁶ Any supporting documentation provided cannot be returned and will be kept on file as part of the supporting documentation should the building be locally listed. Please only send photocopies (subject to relevant copyright) should you wish to keep a copy of any documentation.

	<p>https://library.reading.gov.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/ENQ/WPAC/BIBENQ?SETLVL=&BRN=4628082 The shop in 1905 when it was the Central Drug Store.</p>
	<p>https://library.reading.gov.uk/cgi-bin/spydus.exe/ENQ/WPAC/BIBENQ?SETLVL=&BRN=4626502 Western part of the parade c1885 which shows the shop when it was occupied by Salmon (James Gafford sketch).</p>
<p>Sale of business of W H Prestwich to S V White of 52 Castle Street.</p>	<p>Berkshire Chronicle 9 April 1870</p>
<p>R F Salmon move to 84</p>	<p>Reading Mercury 5 December 1868</p>
<p>E H Salmon move from 84</p>	<p>Reading Mercury 2 September 1882</p>
<p>Occupiers of units</p>	<p>Street directories 1842, 1865, 1888, 1899</p>
	<p>West side of parade</p>
	<p>84 Broad Street April 2021</p>
	<p>St Marys service area</p>

Continue on separate sheet if necessary

For official use only.

Recommendation confirmed/rejected by Conservation Officer:

Date:

Conservation Officer signature confirming recommendation:

Position:

Print name:

Reasons that the recommendation for locally listing the building/ structure have been confirmed/ rejected

Any additional comments regarding the building/ structure

Building/ structure identification:

Grid reference:

UPRN:

Signature of Manager accepting recommendation: _____

Date: _____

Position: _____

Print name: _____

REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	29 MARCH 2023		
TITLE:	CONSULTATION ON INCREASING PLANNING FEES AND PERFORMANCE		
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams		
JOB TITLE:	Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)	E-MAIL:	Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of consultations currently underway on proposals by Government, which if carried forward will impact on the planning service. There is also a consultation on proposed changes to the General Permitted Development Order (the GPDO) covered in a separate report.
- 1.2 Officers consider that these proposed changes are of interest to the public and councillors and this report provides a summary of the proposals with a draft of officer responses (Appendix 1).
- 1.3 Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and to endorse the responses proposed by Officers.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you note the report,
- 2.2 That you endorse the officer responses as set out in appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Views are sought on proposals to increase planning fees and to improve the performance of local planning authorities. The consultation lasts for 8 weeks and began on 28 February 2023 with a closing date of 25 April 2023. The consultation paper describes how all users of the planning system should experience a quality and timely planning service. It also describes how feedback from different sources make clear that problems with performance stem from inadequate resources and capability.
- 3.2 In summary the consultation seeks comment on proposals to:
 - increase planning fees by 35% for major applications and 25% for all other applications
 - additional fees for bespoke or 'fast track' services
 - make an annual inflation-related adjustment to planning fees
 - ring-fence additional fees income
 - double fees for retrospective applications
 - remove the 'free-go' for repeat applications
 - introduce a prior approval fee for the permitted development right allowing the Crown to develop sites within the perimeter of a closed defence site
 - build planning capacity and capability within local authorities, including challenges in recruitment and retention, and how these can be addressed
 - reduce the Planning Guarantee from 26 weeks to 16 weeks for non-major applications
 - improve the quality of the local authority planning service by the monitoring of more performance measures.

- 3.3 The consultation also seeks views on providing local planning authorities with additional and trained resources and other technical specialists to increase capacity and capability in the planning system as quickly as possible.
- 3.4 There is a stick with the increased fee carrot however as the government is only prepared to introduce fee increases if planning performance also improves. The consultation proposes a new approach to how the performance of local planning authorities is measured using a broader set of quantitative and qualitative measures.

Planning fees

- 3.5 The paper acknowledges that planning application fees rarely cover the costs to the local planning authority of processing applications. It is estimated that the overall national cost of the planning application (development management) service is approximately £675 million annually. This is significantly more than the income received from planning fees (approximately £393 million). The consultation paper estimates that even with the proposed increased planning fees would still represent less than 1% of the total development cost. Nevertheless, the paper seeks views on whether the 25% increase should also be applied to householders.
- 3.6 In addition to the % increase application fees (see table at Appendix 2 for current and proposed fees) the consultation seeks views on doubling planning fees for retrospective applications. The aim being to discourage unauthorised development and thereby reduce the enforcement work associated with these. Views are also sought on stopping free second goes.
- 3.7 The gap between fee income and cost of service is being met from Local Authority funds and some discretionary fee income sources such as payments for pre-app and administration services. The paper also describes the other tasks carried out for no charge, such as, enforcement activity, dealing with listed building applications and assessing proposed local plan site allocations. The paper considers local planning authorities' ability to charge for bespoke or additional services as long as these charges do not exceed the cost of providing the service. The intention is to retain these alternative sources of income and ideas are sought on other income generating services.
- 3.8 The paper discusses the purpose of planning application fees, which is to enable a local planning authority to perform the statutory function of processing planning applications. However, planning budgets are not ringfenced which means that planning fees can be diverted to support wider corporate budget priorities rather than be reinvested to support improved planning service delivery. Views are sought on whether the additional income arising from the proposed fee increase should be ringfenced.

Capability

- 3.9 The consultation paper refers to a survey of local planning services in 2021 (see link below) when more than half of respondents identified difficulties in recruiting principal planners. In addition, the survey identified a significant shortfall in specialist skills particularly in viability, digital, design, conservation and heritage, climate change and ecology.
- 3.10 A cross-sector working group with representatives from local government, the private sector and professional bodies has been created to design and deliver a programme of support to build capacity and capability strategy across local planning authorities. The consultation paper seeks views and experience on current challenges in recruiting and retaining planning professionals.

Local planning authority performance

- 3.11 The paper describes how feedback from developers suggests that the time taken to get a planning application decided consistently takes much longer than the statutory period. Extension of time agreements are currently accepted when assessing a local planning authority's performance for speed of decision-making. It is now proposed to amend this by only including the number of applications that are determined within the statutory determination periods, 13 weeks for Major Applications or 8 weeks for all others (16 weeks for applications with Environmental Impact Statements). It is also proposed to reduce the Planning Guarantee period for non-major applications from 26 to 16 weeks.

- 3.12 The paper also seeks views on different ways of considering planning performance by looking at other metrics than the current two - speed and quality (measured by appeal decisions). The paper lists possible quantitative metrics that could be used. See table at Appendix 3.
- 3.13 Finally, the paper seeks views on introducing a qualitative measure through a 'customer experience' metric. A customer satisfaction survey is suggested which focuses on the overall quality and timeliness of both the pre-application service and the decision-making service. It could also be used as a measure for community engagement, including the volume and diversity of people who participate in the planning application process.

4. IMPLEMENTATION

- 4.1 The intention is to introduce the fee increase by this coming summer 2023 with a further review no later than three years following implementation. However, the paper also seeks views on a proposal to introduce legislation for all planning fees to be adjusted annually in line with inflation. The paper suggests that further consultations would be needed before changes to performance assessments are introduced. No date for implementation given.

5. OFFICER COMMENTARY ON THE CHANGES

- 5.1 The officer responses to the questions posed in the paper are provided at Appendix 1. Where applicable reasons are given for the answers provided.
- 5.2 Overall, officers are relieved that finally planning application fees are to be increased after a 5 year pause in what used to be an annual review. We also welcome being able to comment on other sources of income, such as charging for second applications and encouraging applications to be submitted before works begin by charging extra for retrospective applications.
- 5.3 Officers have suggested that free second goes could still be offered when a pre-app service has been used to encourage the take up of pre-app and stop the loop-hole of using a first application to get planning advice when it is refused or recommended be withdrawn by the officer. Officers have also questioned why Listed Building Consents are free when the work involved requires specialist advice and local authorities are required to pay for publicity in local papers.
- 5.4 Officers however are not happy with the move to discourage the use of extensions of time, which would be the outcome of changing the performance measurement as proposed to decisions within either 8 or 13 weeks for majors. It is not always officers who ask for extensions of time but developers also welcome being able to continue to negotiate rather than having to withdraw or receive a refused decision or a decision with complicated pre-commencement conditions. This change would be more severe if the free second application was also to go.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).
- 6.2 The proposed changes to application fees will not affect the physical construction of buildings or their environmental performance and it remains to be seen if the support for specialist advisors, which would include those engaged on improving environmental and climate performance of new developments.

7. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

- 7.1 The processing of planning applications efficiently and effectively contributes to the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan:
1. Healthy Environments
 2. Thriving Communities
 3. Inclusive Economy

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

8.1 The consultation paper proposes performance measures that rely on engagement with the public on the performance of the planning service. Officers welcome this move as being a genuine way to assess how all customers of the planning service feel we are doing.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 Where appropriate the Council must have regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

9.2 There are no direct implications for these duties arising from the consultation paper.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 No direct legal implications.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The proposed increase of fees, if applied to the current 22/23 income from planning applications, would have resulted in an increase of approximately £450k. Added to this would be fees for resubmissions and increased fees for retrospective applications. The outcome of the consultation will determine if any uplift in income will be ringfenced to be reinvested in the planning service.

22/23	Current Majors Fee £	Current Others Fee £	Total Current Fee £	Majors Fee £ (+35%)	Others Fee £ (+25%)	Total With fee increase £
Q1 April - June	124,030	65,166	189,196	167,440	81,457	248,897
Q2 July - September	164,637	54,893	219,530	222,259	68,616	290,875
Q3 October - December	163,995	55,716	219,711	221,393	69,645	291,038
Q4 January - March	24,112	88,925	113,037	32,551	111,156	143,707
Totals	476,774	264,700	521,763	643,643	330,874	974,517

Background papers:

[Increasing planning fees and performance: technical consultation - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/increasing-planning-fees-and-performance-technical-consultation)

[survey of local planning authorities in 2021](#)

Appendix 1 – Questions posed and Draft Officer Responses

Question 1. Do you agree that fees for planning applications should be increased by 35% for major applications? Yes/no/don't know. Please give your reasons.

Answer: Yes. Research shows the gap between fee income and costs to LPA.s processing applications but also how small the application fee is in terms of the cost of most developments and the enhanced value to property arising from the granting of planning permission.

Question 2. Do you agree that the fee for householder planning applications should be increased by 25%? Yes/no/don't know. Please give your reasons.

Answer: Yes. Research shows the gap between fee income and costs to LPA.s processing applications and how small the application fee is in terms of the cost of most developments and the enhanced value to property arising from the granting of planning permission.

Question 3. Do you agree that fees for all other planning applications should be increased by 25%? If not, please include in the comments box the particular application types where you believe the proposed increase is too high or too low. Your comments should be accompanied with evidence/costs if possible. Yes/no/don't know. Please give your reasons.

Answer: Yes. Research shows the gap between fee income and costs to LPA.s processing applications but also how small the application fee is in terms of the cost of most developments and the enhanced value to property arising from the granting of planning permission. For this reason, Reading Borough Council believes there is a case for increasing the fee for all new residential development by 35%. A 10% reduction for sites with less than 10 dwellings might lead to sites being parcelled up to take advantage of the saving.

Question 4. Are there any other application types or planning services which are not currently charged for but should require a fee or for which the current fee level or structure is inadequate?

Answer: Yes. There is currently no fee for applications for Listed Building Consent. However, regulations require that these applications are publicised in the local paper and the assessment of most proposals requires specialist advice from an experienced and qualified consultant or officer. Gaining Listed Building Consent for works can greatly enhance the value of a Listed Building therefore it is not unreasonable for the applicant to share some of these costs.

Question 5. Please can you provide examples of bespoke or 'fast track' services which have worked well or you think could be introduced for an additional fee? Are there any schemes that have been particularly effective?

Answer: No examples to offer.

Question 6. Do you agree with the proposal for all planning fees to be adjusted annually in line with inflation? Yes/no/don't know. Please give your reasons.

Answer: Yes.

Question 7. Do you consider that the additional income arising from the proposed fee increase should be ringfenced for spending within the local authority planning department? Yes/no/don't know. Please give your reasons.

Answer: Yes. As identified in the research LPA.s are being encouraged to embrace using new technologies and digital working. This will cost more money. Also instructing specialists to provide expert advice to meet a reduced timetable for deciding a planning application, if performance measures are changed as proposed.

Question 8. Do you agree that the fee for retrospective applications should be doubled, i.e. increased by 100%, for all applications except for householder applications? Yes/no/don't know.

Answer: Yes. The argument given in the paper is to ease the burden on planning enforcement, but it is our experience that retrospective applications arise from other reasons. For example, when householder is selling a property without proof that permission was granted or was not required (permitted development) for works carried out by a vendor usually wants the decision quicker than

8 weeks. Therefore, Reading agrees with the principle of doubling the fee for retrospective applications but suggests that it should apply to householders too.

Question 9. Do you consider that the ability for a 'free-go' for repeat applications should be either:

- (a) removed
- (b) reduced for re-applications within 12 months
- (c) retained
- (d) none of the above
- (e) don't know

Please give your reasons.

Answer: d) Reading Borough Council believe that:

- **if no pre-app was sought before the original application was submitted there should be no free second go**
- **if pre-app was sought before the original application was submitted applications resubmitted within 6 months of a decision or confirmation of application being withdrawn (currently it is from date of submission for withdrawn applications) should be free. Thereafter full fee payable.**

Reason for this approach is that we are aware that some applicants use the free second go as an alternative to seeking pre-app. Officers end up providing the advice on what needs to be done to make an application acceptable in policy terms in their officer report and/or reasons for refusal either. It is a loophole in enabling LPA.s to generate income.

Question 10. Do you agree that a fee of £96 (or £120 if the proposed fee increase comes forward) should be charged for any prior approval application for development by the Crown on a closed defence site? Yes/no/don't know

Answer: Yes

Question 11. What do you consider to be the greatest skills and expertise gaps within local planning authorities?

Answer: LPA.s once typically employed full or part time expert advice on conservation/historic buildings, ecology, landscape, sustainable development, legal advice, retail impact, urban design etc. Most, to manage tightened budgets now either contract in expert advice when needed or share an expert with other authorities. This sounds sensible but can lead to delays in receiving the advice needed and with officers having to join a long queue of other officers to get the advice they need. It does not help with efficient working and improved performance.

Assistance to employ in house expertise would be welcome or to run courses on specialisms to enable planning officers to be competent at specialist areas and to build up in house knowledge.

Question 12. In addition to increasing planning fees, in what other ways could the Government support greater capacity and capability within local planning departments and pathways into the profession? Please provide examples of existing good practice or initiatives if possible.

Answer: See above reply to Q11.

Question 13. How do you suggest we encourage people from under-represented groups, including women and ethnic minority groups, to become planning professionals?

Answer: Whilst Reading's Planning team is broadly well represented across those groups that are nationally under-represented, there remains more work to do in presenting Planning as a career for all. The council have a good relationship with both the University of Reading and Reading College who are both feeding into the national talent pool. Officers have recently been approached to engage with students to allow them opportunities to be involved in the Planning and design approach for the LUF schemes the council was successful in receiving funding for and we hope this will help be a catalyst for some local interest in careers in Planning. Nationally, the council would like more engagement in primary and secondary education streams, such as the STEM programme which has resulted in British Science Week being a focus for schools – the built environment is an important extension of STEM and therefore schemes to encourage practical involvement in Planning would be welcome.

Question 14. Do you agree that the Planning Guarantee should better mirror the statutory determination period for a planning application and be set at 16 weeks for non-major applications and retained at 26 weeks for major applications? Yes/no/don't know. Please give your reasons.

Answer: No. Leave the PG at 26 weeks for all types of applications. Minor applications can be just as complicated as Major applications.

Question 15. Do you agree that the performance of local planning authorities for speed of decision-making should be assessed on the percentage of applications that are determined within the statutory determination period i.e. excluding extension of times and Planning Performance Agreements? Yes/no/don't know. Please give your reasons.

Answer: No. It is our experience that most applicants are very content with the ability to negotiate an extension to the determination date, particularly when additional expert advice is needed for a proposed development that in most other respects is acceptable. The alternative would be for the LPA to determine the application but with complicated pre-commencement planning conditions (something we are meant to be trying to avoid) or to refuse the application for the applicant having failed to demonstrate all is acceptable or the applicant withdraws the application. This will be even less popular if the proposed removal of the 2nd application free go also gets deleted.

Question 16. Do you agree that performance should be assessed separately for:

- (a) Major applications - **Yes** / no / don't know
- (b) Non-Major applications (excluding householder applications) - **Yes** / no / don't know
- (c) Householder applications - **Yes** / no / don't know
- (d) Discharge of conditions - **Yes** / no / don't know
- (e) County matters applications - **Yes** / no / don't know.

Question 17. Do you consider that any of the proposed quantitative metrics should not be included? Yes/no/don't know. Please give your reasons and, if appropriate, state the metric letter(s) and number(s) that you believe should not be included.

Answer: F. Applications decided by Planning Committee not relevant as long as decisions are still being made within agreed time frames. The second metric is not a measure of performance.

Question 18. Are there any quantitative metrics that have not been included that should be? Yes / no / don't know. Please indicate what additional quantitative metrics you consider should be included.

Answer: No others suggested.

Question 19. Do you support the introduction of a qualitative metric that measures customer experience? Yes/no/don't know. Please give your reasons.

Answer: Yes. Gathering data from customers on their experience is a very useful way to truly understand how a planning service is performing. Speed of decisions is not a great indicator if the customer feels that they have not been listened to.

Question 20. What do you consider would be the best metric(s) for measuring customer experience?

Answer: Irrespective of the decision reached how satisfied were you with how you were dealt with by officers dealing with your application?

Question 21. Are there any other ways in which the performance of local planning authorities or level of community engagement could be improved?

Question 22. Do you have any views on the implications of the proposals in this consultation for you, or the group or business you represent, and on anyone with a relevant protected characteristic? If so, please explain who, which groups, including those with protected characteristics, or which businesses may be impacted and how. Is there anything that could be done to mitigate any impact identified?

Answer: No views on the implications for anyone with a relevant protected characteristic.

Appendix 2 – Current and new fees if increases as proposed are introduced

Application	Current fee	Proposed fee (35% major applications, 25% all other applications)
Prior Approval	£96	£120
Householder	£206	£258
Non-major	£462 per dwelling or per 75 sqm of non-residential floorspace	£578 per dwelling or per 75 sqm of non-residential floorspace
Major 10 to 50 dwellings and commercial non-residential between 1,000 and 3,750 sqm of floorspace	£462 per every dwelling or every 75 sqm of non-residential floorspace	£624 per every dwelling or every 75 sqm of non-residential floorspace
Major Majors	£22,859 + £138 for each additional dwelling in excess of 50 dwellings or additional 75 sqm in excess of 3,750 sqm up to maximum of £300,000	£30,860 + £186 for each additional dwelling in excess of 50 dwellings or additional 75 sqm in excess of 3,750 sqm up to maximum of £405,000

Metric	Measurement
A Average Speed of decision-making	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Average time taken to determine majors (inc. Extension of Time (EoT) and Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs)) 2. Average time taken to determine non-majors (inc. EoT and PPAs) 3. Average time taken to determine householders (inc. EoT and PPAs) 4. Average time taken to determine discharge of conditions (inc. EoT and PPAs) 5. Average time taken to determine county matters (inc. EoT and PPAs)
B. Quality of decision-making	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Major appeals allowed by Planning Inspectorate as % of all appeal decisions. 2. Non-major appeals allowed by Planning Inspectorate as % of all appeal decisions. 3. Householder appeals allowed by the Planning Inspectorate as % of all appeal decisions
C. Extension of Times	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Total number of EoTs as percentage of all decisions majors 2. Total number of EoTs as percentage of all decisions non-majors 3. Total number of EoTs as percentage of all decisions householders
D. Backlog	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Average time taken to validate planning applications 2. Total number of cases beyond the Planning Guarantee period (currently 26 weeks for all applications but proposed to change to 16 weeks for non-major applications)
E. Planning Enforcement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Average number of weeks taken to respond to suspected breaches of planning and determine the appropriate course of action. 2. Average number of weeks to take action where a breach of planning has occurred, having decided it is expedient to do so. 3. Total number of cases over 6 months old as percentage of all open cases.
F. Planning Committee	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Percentage of delegated decisions and committee decisions 2. Percentage of committee decisions to refuse against officer recommendation that are subsequently allowed at appeal

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REPORT BY DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES

TO:	PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE		
DATE:	29 March 2023		
TITLE:	CONSULTATION ON CHANGES TO THE GDPO		
AUTHOR:	Julie Williams		
JOB TITLE:	Development Manager (Planning & Building Control)	E-MAIL:	Julie.williams@reading.gov.uk

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY OF REPORT

- 1.1 To advise Committee of consultations currently underway by Government, which will impact on the planning service. There is also a consultation on proposed fee increases and Performance improvement discussed in a separate report.
- 1.2 Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and to endorse the responses proposed by Officers as shown in appendix 1.

2. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- 2.1 That you note the report,
- 2.2 That you endorse the officer responses as set out in appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This consultation is on proposed changes to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015, as amended. It covers the following areas:
 - A new permitted development right to support temporary recreational campsites.
 - Changes to the existing permitted development rights for solar equipment and a new permitted development right for solar canopies.
 - Amendment to the existing permitted development right which allows local authorities to undertake certain development. This change would allow bodies to undertake the work on behalf of the local authority.
 - Changes to the existing permitted development right allowing for the temporary use of buildings or land for film-making purposes.

This consultation began on 28 February and runs to 25 April 2023

4. THE CHANGES BEING PROPOSED.

Temporary use of land for recreational campsites

- 4.1 The paper explains that "... the government recognises the importance of supporting the local tourism industry and domestic holidaymakers to ensure that as many people as possible can enjoy summer breaks in England". It is proposed that a new permitted development right would allow for the temporary use of land for recreational campsites with a limit of no more than 30 tents to be erected on the land at any one time. Also included is the provision of moveable structures related to the campsite use, such as portable toilets. The new right would not allow for the siting of caravans, motorhomes and campervans.
- 4.2 The right would be subject to limitations and conditions to control impacts and protect local amenity and would not override separate consents under other regulatory regimes that may be required or land ownership or owner consent.
- 4.3 Comments are also sought whether this temporary use should be subject to prior approval requiring the site owner or operator to notify their local authority annually before a recreational campsite commences.

Changes to allow for the installation of solar equipment on and within the curtilages of domestic and non-domestic buildings

- 4.4 An existing permitted development right (under Class A of Part 14) allows for the installation, alteration or replacement of microgeneration solar photovoltaic or solar thermal equipment on a dwellinghouse or a block of flats, or a building situated within the curtilage of a dwellinghouse or a block of flats. One of the conditions requires that solar equipment on domestic rooftops do not protrude more than 0.2 metres beyond the plane of the wall or the roof slope when measured from the perpendicular with the external surface of the wall or roof slope, and it cannot result in the highest part of the equipment being higher than the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney). This in effect means that homes with flat roofs cannot use the right.
- 4.5 The proposed change would extend the permitted development right to apply to domestic buildings with flat roofs. The idea is to keep the existing limitation but specify that this applies to pitched roofs only and to specify that solar panels can be installed on a flat roof, where the highest part of the solar PV equipment would not be higher than 0.6 metres above the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney).
- 4.6 It is also proposed to remove the limitation that prevents the installation of solar equipment on a wall of a domestic property fronting a highway in a conservation area.
- 4.7 Views are sought on other ideas that would support the deployment of rooftop solar generating equipment.

Amendment to the existing permitted development right allowing certain forms of development to be undertaken by local authorities, including the installation of electric vehicle charging points. This change would allow bodies to undertake the work on behalf of the local authority.

- 4.8 Class A of Part 12 of GDPO allows local authorities to carry out various development in connection with its duties, such as installing new street furniture and equipment, including electric vehicle (EV) charging points. The consultation seeks views on allowing development undertaken by others on behalf of the local authority to also be permitted development. The consultation specifically refers to charge point providers installing public EV charge points but would extend to other similar work carried out on behalf of a local authority.

Amendments to the existing permitted development right which allows for the temporary use of buildings or land for film-making purposes to provide further flexibility to production crews and film makers.

- 4.9 The changes would increase the period of time that the right can be used and increase the maximum area of land and height of temporary structures that can be used for film-making purposes.

5. OFFICER COMMENTS

- 5.1 Officers have provided their draft answers to the questions as posed and these can be seen at appendix 1.
- 5.2 Initial thoughts on the temporary camping proposal were that we would have no comment but on further reflection having done some calculations and thinking of what could go wrong have opted with disagreeing with the proposal. 30 tents could mean anything between 30 people or 120 people if the size of tent is not specified. That then leads to the question of sanitation, water and energy supplies, pollution, traffic and disturbance to neighbours. The policing of these sites will inevitably fall on the local authority to deal with and therefore officers consider that proposals for these uses should be subject to planning applications with an appropriate fee based on site area and consultations.
- 5.3 The proposed relaxation (para 4.6 above) to allow solar installations on flat roofs is welcome but the relaxation for principal elevations in conservation areas does raise concerns. Officers are mindful of how jarring modern additions (eg; satellite dishes, external lighting or CCTV cameras) can appear in conservations areas and consider that in these locations the balance between renewable energy and heritage should be in favour of protecting the character and appearance of the conservation area.

Planning applications should be submitted and each application considered on its merits with encouragement given if discreet solutions can be found.

5.4 The proposed changes to Class 12 recognises that many local authorities do not have in house contractors with the expertise to install EV charging points and that many contract out works to other local businesses. The criteria to comply with Class 12 it is presumed will require evidence of an existing contractual arrangement.

5.5 Officers have no comment on the film making related permitted development right.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND CLIMATE IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at its meeting on 26 February 2019 (Minute 48 refers).

6.2 The objective to allow more properties (flat roofed houses) to benefit from solar panel installations to generate energy is welcome, as is the proposal to allow local authorities to speed up installing points for EV charging by extending Class 12 works to be carried out by contractors engaged by the local authority. It is not clear

7. CONTRIBUTION TO STRATEGIC AIMS

7.1 The proposed changes have the potential of contributing positively to the themes of the Council's Corporate Plan:

1. Healthy Environments
2. Thriving Communities
3. Inclusive Economy

8. COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION

8.1 The proposed changes would not impact on current arrangements for community engagement or public consultation. Statutory consultation takes place in connection with applications for prior approval as specified in the Order.

9. EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

9.1 Where appropriate the Council must have regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, Section 149, to have due regard to the need to—

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

9.2 There are no direct implications arising from the topics in this report.

10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 No direct legal implications.

11. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None directly from the consultation.

Background paper:

[Permitted development rights: supporting temporary recreational campsites, renewable energy and film-making consultation](#)

Temporary use of land for recreational campsites

Q1. Do you agree that a new permitted development right should be introduced that will allow the temporary use of land for recreational campsites and associated facilities? Yes/No/Don't Know. Please give your reasons.

Answer: No. The management of a campsite for up to 30 tents (potentially 60 people+) in terms of waste and noise and other forms of pollution needs careful consideration and consultation with the local residents most impacted. Requires enforcement to manage compliance.

Q2. Do you agree that the permitted development right should only apply to the placing of tents? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: See above answer to Q1

Q3. Do you agree that the permitted development right should allow up to a maximum of 30 tents to be erected on the land? Yes/No/Don't Know. Please give your reasons. If you have responded no, please provide your alternative suggestion and justification.

Answer: Halve the number of tents to 15 to test impact and management ability of organiser.

Q4. Do you agree that the permitted development right should be limited to up to 60 days per calendar year? Yes/No/Don't Know. Please give your reasons. If you have responded no, please provide your alternative suggestion and justification.

Answer: If this does go ahead a limit of 60 consecutive days sounds reasonable.

Q5. Do you agree that the permitted development right should require the provision of temporary on-site facilities to provide waste disposal, showers and toilets? Yes/No/Don't Know. Please give your reasons and provide details of any other facilities that should be required.

Answer: Yes - plus details of management regime and agreement from contractors.

Q6. Do you agree that the permitted development right should not apply on land which is in or forms part of sites of special scientific interest, Scheduled Monuments, safety hazard areas, military explosives storage areas and land within the curtilage of a listed building? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Yes

Q7. Are there any other planning matters that should be considered? Yes/No/Don't Know. Please specify.

Answer: Ecological sites, AWE exclusion sites or similar.

Q8. Do you agree that the permitted development right should require annual prior notification to the local authority of the matters set out above? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Yes: To allow annual monitoring

Q9. Do you think that, in areas of flood risk, the right should allow for prior approval with regard to flooding on the site? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: No

Q10. Do you think that any of the proposed changes in relation to a new permitted development right for temporary recreational campsites could impact on a) businesses b) local planning authorities c)

communities? Yes/No/Don't know. Please give your reasons. It would be helpful if you could specify whether your comments relate to a) business, b) local planning authorities, or c) communities, or a combination.

Answer: Do not intend to answer this one.

Q11. Do you think that proposed changes in relation to a new permitted development right for temporary recreational campsites could give rise to any impacts on people who share a protected characteristic? (Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion or Belief; Sex; and Sexual Orientation). Yes/No/ Don't know. If so, please give your reasons.

Answer: No

Changes to allow for the installation of solar equipment on and within the curtilages of domestic and non-domestic buildings

Q12. Should the permitted development right for solar on domestic rooftops be amended so that they can be installed on flat roofs where the highest part of the equipment would be no higher than 0.6 metres above the highest part of the roof (excluding any chimney)? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Yes - would open up more opportunities for residents to diversify in energy generation.

Q13. Are there any circumstances where it would not be appropriate to permit solar on flat roofs of domestic premises? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Yes – perhaps not within 2 metres of an adjacent property with a side or rear facing window?

Q14. Do you agree that solar on a wall which fronts a highway should be permitted in conservation areas? Yes/No/Don't know.

Answer: No - modern additions can appear intrusive in conservations areas and in these locations the balance between renewable energy and heritage should be in favour of protecting the character and appearance of the conservation area. Planning applications should be submitted and each application considered on its merits with encouragement given if discreet solutions can be found.

Q15. Do you have any views on the other existing limitations which apply to this permitted development right which could be amended to further support the deployment of solar on domestic rooftops? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Don't know

Q16. Do you agree that the existing limitation which prevents stand-alone solar being installed so that it is closer to the highway than the dwellinghouse in conservation areas, should be removed? Yes/No/Don't know.

Answer: No - modern additions can appear intrusive in conservations areas and in these locations the balance between renewable energy and heritage should be in favour of protecting the character and appearance of the conservation area. Planning applications should be submitted and each application considered on its merits with encouragement given if discreet solutions can be found.

Q17. Do you have any views on how the other existing limitations which apply to this permitted development right could be amended to further support the deployment of stand-alone domestic solar? Yes/No/Don't know..

Answer: Don't know

Q18. Do you agree that the current threshold permitting the generation of up to 1MW of electricity on non-domestic buildings should be removed? Yes/No/ Don't Know. Please give your reasons.

Answer: Don't know

Q19. Is the current prior approval for solar equipment on non-domestic rooftops (where equipment is over 50kW but no more than 1MW) effective? Yes/No/ Don't Know.

Answer: Don't know

Q20. Are there any circumstances where it would not be appropriate to allow for the installation of non-domestic rooftop solar where there is no limit on the capacity of electricity generated? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Don't know

Q21. Do you agree that the existing limitations relating to the installation of solar on non-domestic buildings in article 2(3) land - which includes conservation areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Broads, National Parks and World Heritage Sites – should be removed? Yes/No/Don't know.

Answer: No - modern additions can appear intrusive in these areas and in these locations the balance between renewable energy and appearance and heritage should be in favour of protecting the character and appearance of the area. Planning applications should be submitted and each application considered on its merits with encouragement given if discreet solutions can be found.

Q22. Do you have any views on how the other existing limitations which apply to the permitted development right could be amended to further support the deployment of solar on non-domestic rooftops? Yes/No/Don't know.

Answer: Don't know

Q23. Do you agree that the existing limitation which prevents stand-alone solar being installed so that it is closer to the highway than the building in article 2(3) land - which includes conservation areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Broads, National Parks and World Heritage Sites – should be removed? Yes/No/Don't know.

Answer: No - modern additions can appear intrusive in these areas and in these locations the balance between renewable energy and appearance and heritage should be in favour of protecting the character and appearance of the area. Planning applications should be submitted and each application considered on its merits with encouragement given if discreet solutions can be found.

Q24. Do you have any views on how the other existing limitations which apply to this permitted development right could be amended to further support the deployment of stand-alone non-domestic solar? Yes/No/Don't know.

Answer: Don't know

Q25. Do you agree that permitted development rights should enable the installation of solar canopies in ground-level off-street car parks in non-domestic settings? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Yes – to facilitate the use of these areas to generate energy.

Q26. Do you agree that a permitted development right for solar canopies should not apply on land which is within 10 metres of the curtilage of a dwellinghouse? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Don't know

Q27. Do you agree that a permitted development right for solar canopies should not apply on land which is in or forms part of a site designated as a scheduled monument or which is within the curtilage of a listed building?

Answer: No - modern additions can appear intrusive in these areas and in these locations the balance between renewable energy and appearance and heritage should be in favour of protecting the character and appearance of the area. Planning applications should be submitted and each application considered on its merits with encouragement given if discreet solutions can be found.

Q28. Do you agree that the permitted development right would not apply to article 2(3) land - which includes conservation areas, Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the Broads, National Parks and World Heritage Sites? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: No - modern additions can appear intrusive in these areas and in these locations the balance between renewable energy and appearance and heritage should be in favour of protecting the character and appearance of the area. Planning applications should be submitted and each application considered on its merits with encouragement given if discreet solutions can be found.

Q29. Do you agree that solar canopies should be permitted up to 4 metres in height? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Don't know. Seems too tall but not sure if would be practical to have lower than 4 metres.

Q30. Do you think that the right should allow for prior approval with regard to design, siting, external appearance and impact of glare? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Yes – the prior approval should allow consideration of these issues for safety and amenity reasons.

Q31. Are there any other limitations that should apply to a permitted development right for solar canopies to limit potential impacts? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Don't know

Q32. Do you think that any of the proposed changes in relation to the permitted development rights for solar could impact on: a) businesses b) local planning authorities c) communities?

Answer: Don't know

Q33. Do you think that proposed changes in relation to the permitted development rights for solar could give rise to any impacts on people who share a protected characteristic? (Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion or Belief; Sex; and Sexual Orientation).

Answer: No

Amendment to the existing permitted development right allowing certain forms of development to be undertaken by local authorities to allow bodies to undertake the work on behalf of the local authority.

Q34. Do you agree that the permitted development right allowing for development by local authorities should be amended so that the development permitted can also be undertaken by a body acting on behalf of the local authority? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Yes – subject to conditions of evidence of existing contractual arrangement to cover works specified

Q35. Do you think that any of the proposed changes in relation to the permitted development right could impact on: a) businesses b) local planning authorities c) communities? Yes/No/Don't know. Please give your reasons. It would be helpful if you could specify whether your comments relate to a) business, b) local planning authorities, or c) communities, or a combination.

Answer: Don't know

Q36. Do you think that proposed changes in relation to the permitted development right could give rise to any impacts on people who share a protected characteristic? (Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion or Belief; Sex; and Sexual Orientation)? Yes/No/ Don't know. If so, please give your reasons.

Answer: No

Amendments to existing permitted development right which allows for the temporary use of buildings or land for film-making purposes to provide further flexibility to production crews and film makers.

Q37. Do you agree that the maximum period of time land or a building can be used for the purpose of commercial film making should be increased to 12 months in any 27 month period? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Don't know

Q38. Do you agree that the maximum area of land or land on which the building is situated being used for the purposes of film making should be increased to 3 hectares? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Don't know

Q39. Do you agree that the maximum height of any temporary structure, works, plant or machinery allowed for under the right should be increased to 20 metres? Yes/No/Don't Know.

Answer: Don't know

Q40. Do you think that any of the proposed changes in relation to the permitted development right could impact on: a) businesses b) local planning authorities c) communities? Yes/No/Don't know. Please give your reasons. It would be helpful if you could specify whether your comments relate to a) business, b) local planning authorities, or c) communities, or a combination.

Answer: Don't know

Q41. Do you think that proposed changes in relation to the permitted development right could give rise to any impacts on people who share a protected characteristic? (Age; Disability; Gender Reassignment; Pregnancy and Maternity; Race; Religion or Belief; Sex; and Sexual Orientation)? Yes/No/ Don't know. If so, please give your reasons.

Answer: No

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29 March 2023

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 220567

App Type: FUL

Address: 109b Oxford Road, Reading, RG1 7UD

Proposal: Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary A5 takeaway and replacement shopfront (Part retrospective)

Applicant: Express Team Ltd

Deadline: Originally extended to 3rd March 2022

RECOMMENDATIONS

Refuse full planning permission, for the following reasons:

1. In the absence of evidence to the contrary, the applicant has failed to demonstrate that the construction, odour control measures, noise levels, and running specifications of the kitchen extract flue will not result in noise, disturbance and odours affecting occupiers of surrounding dwellings resulting in harm to the amenity of occupiers of those dwellings. This would be contrary to Policies CC8, CR6, EN16 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Informatives to include:

- 1) Refused drawings and details
- 2) Positive and Proactive

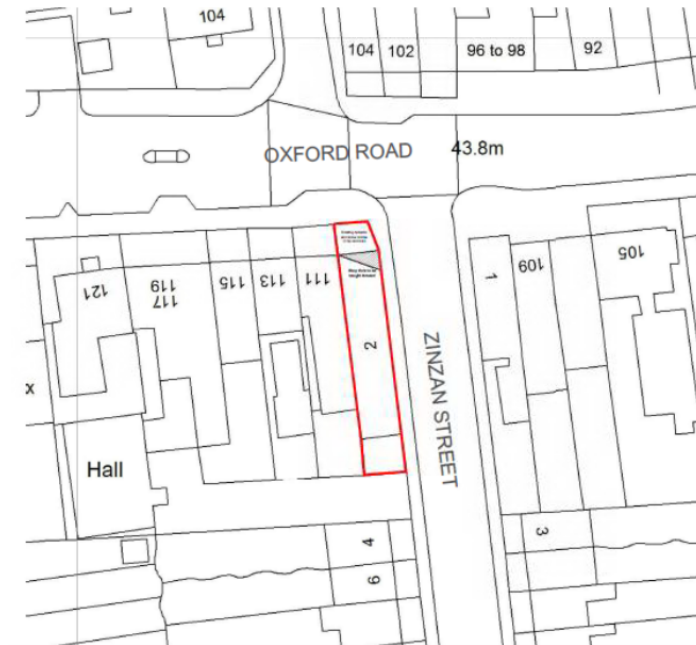
1. INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The application relates to a ground floor shop at the end of a terrace located on the south side of Oxford Road and forming the corner with Zinzan Street. Until 2018, the ground floor was occupied by a vacant betting shop 'Ladbrokes' - a *Sui Generis* use. The upper floors are in residential use.
- 1.2 This part of Oxford Road is characterised by retail/commercial activity at ground floor, with residential uses (ancillary to the ground floor use) on the upper floors. Backing on to the site are residential properties in Zinzan Street which are predominantly Victorian terraces. Oxford Road is a busy shopping street and a major route into and out of Reading town centre for vehicles and pedestrians alike.
- 1.3 The building is not listed but is located within Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area. The site is located within the defined Reading Central Area, but outside of the central core, primary shopping area and office core areas. In addition, the site is also within an air quality management area.

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

- 1.4 The application was called in by Councillor Page and Councillor Rowland due to concerns regarding the impact on heritage assets and odour/noise disturbance.

Location Plan



Not to Scale

The application site as seen from Oxford Road:



2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 Application 180273 granted planning permission for “Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary takeaway and replacement shopfront”. This was approved subject to pre-commencement conditions intended to control the materials used in the new façade and the construction and control of kitchen extraction/ventilation equipment. No such details were submitted and, furthermore, works commenced on site which were not undertaken in accordance with the approved plans. Given that the change of use and associated development occurred without the discharge of conditions, the works are unauthorised.
- 2.2 In response and given the level of concern raised over the works that had taken place, an Enforcement Notice dated 17 January 2020 was served under ref Legal/SQ /IKEN13003 with the following requirements:
- (a) *“Cease the unauthorised use of the building on the land as a restaurant/takeaway (Use class A3/A5)*
 - (b) *Remove, in their entirety, the existing unauthorised shopfronts from the north (Oxford Road) and east (Zinzan Street) elevations including the incorrectly-positioned doorway, display window and transom light and the “ornate timber plinth”, “ornate timber columns” (including corbel mouldings) and “ornate timber panelling”, and restore those elevations to their pre-existing state as shown on the attached Photograph ‘B’ ‘C’ and ‘D’ (Google Streetview images dated June 2018)*

- (c) *Remove the unauthorised air-handling plant installed within the east (Zinzan Street) elevation and restore that elevation to its pre-existing state as shown on the attached Photographs 'C' and 'D' (Google Streetview image dated June 2018)*
- (d) *Remove the two unauthorised air conditioning units and associated pipework and wiring from the south (rear) elevation and restore that elevation to its pre-existing state as shown on the attached Photograph 'E' (Google Streetview image dated June 2018)*
- (e) *Remove from the land all debris and excess building materials resulting from compliance with steps (b) to (d) above”.*

In response, this applicant submitted this application for retrospective planning permission to regularise the works on site. The Enforcement Notice remains in force but has been held in abeyance pending the outcome of this application.

2.3 The current application comprises amended shopfront proposals which are largely based on the previous approval (180273) but with a few changes, most notably the change to a centrally located doorway to the main shopfront and a revised material specification scheme. The proposals also seek to retain the recently installed kitchen extraction equipment used to treat and reduce fumes.

2.4 The application was due to be considered by Planning Applications Committee on 1st March 2023. However, on the day of the meeting officers were advised that a flue had been installed at the rear of the site that was not shown on the plans. The application was removed from the agenda so that the impact of the flue could be assessed. This is discussed further below.

2.5 The following plans and supporting documents have been assessed:

Existing Site - Location Plan 1.0
Existing Plan/Elevation 2.0
Proposed Plan/Elevation 3.0
Received 19th April 2022

Paving Specification
Design and Access Statement April 2022
Multiflow Fan Product Brochure
Fan Specification
Litter Management Letter
Filter Specifications x 2
Filtration Specification
Inspection and Verification Report for Ventilation Services Installed
Design and Specification for Kitchen Ventilation System
Received 19th April 2022

Letter in Response to Environmental Protection Concerns
Received 3rd May 2022

Rectification Report

Received 27th April 2022

Letter from KRS Services Ref: Pepes Reading/Let 1 - in response to Environmental Protection concerns

Received 3rd May 2022

Kitchen Supply & Extract Ventilation Systems - External Noise - Revised Assessment Ref: MDR/J5015d

Received 8th February 2023

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

200142/FUL Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary A5 takeaway and replacement shopfront (Part retrospective). Withdrawn.

180273/FUL Amended Description: Change of use from sui generis (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary takeaway and replacement shopfront (revised elevation details). Permitted.

181755/ADV Externally illuminated fascia sign to Oxford Road and Zinzan Street shopfronts and externally illuminated projecting sign fronting Oxford Road. Permitted.

181785/APPCON Application for discharge of conditions 3,4 and 9 of Planning permission 180273. Split Decision.

Enforcement Notice Legal/SQ /IKEN13003 dated 17 January 2020

NEARBY SITES - 109A Oxford Road

201585/FUL Change of use from an estate agent use class E to a restaurant and hot food takeaway sui generis use class. Granted.

201586/ADV New fascia and projecting sign. Granted.

4. CONSULTATIONS

(i) Statutory

4.1 None

(ii) Non-statutory

4.2 Environmental Protection: Further to updated odour and noise reports, no objection subject to conditions to require maintenance to ensure continues to meet criteria. Discussed further below.

4.3 Heritage Officer: Further to updated plans showing improved shopfront and submission of material samples, no objection to the proposed shopfront. Discussed further below.

(iii) **Public/ local consultation and comments received**

- 4.4 17 neighbour letters were sent, a site notice displayed, and a notice placed in local paper.
- 4.5 One letters of representation made to Ward Councillors and reported to Planning concerned with (in summary):
- Upper floor tenants complaining of a 'terrible stench' all day/nights/weekend
 - Excessive commercial waste
- 4.6 Representations from local groups have been received as follows:
- 4.7 Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee: Support the application subject to quality of materials to be secured by condition. Concern raised over cumulative quantity of Florentine red paint. Applicant should be made aware of the Design Guide for Shopfronts SPD. Consider grey paving, instead of red block paving at the front of the site would be preferable.
- 4.8 Reading Civic Society: No comments received.

5. LEGAL CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 5.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. However, the NPPF does not change the statutory status of the development plan as the starting point for decision making (NPPF paragraph 12).
- 5.3 In this regard, the NPPF states that due weight should be given to the adopted policies of the Local Plan 2019 according to their degree of consistency with the NPPF (the closer the policies in the plan to the policies in the NPPF, the greater the weight that may be given).
- 5.4 Accordingly, the National Planning Policy Framework 2019 and the following development plan policies and supplementary planning guidance are relevant:

National Planning Policy Guidance

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) 2021
National Planning Policy Guidance 2014 onwards

Reading Borough Local Plan 2019

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development

CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
EN6: New Development in a Historic Context
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres
OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines
CR1: Definition of the Centre
CR2: Design in Central Reading
CR6: Living in Central Reading

Supplementary Planning Documents and other guidance

Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)

Design Guide for Shopfronts SPD (2022)

Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2020)

6. APPRAISAL

Principle of development

- 6.1 Planning permission was granted at the Planning Applications Committee 30th May 2018 for “Change of use from *sui generis* (betting shop) to A3 restaurant with ancillary takeaway and replacement shopfront” (application 180273). This application was granted with conditions attached to include material samples and extraction/ventilation details to be submitted prior to commencement of works. The change of use itself from *Sui Generis* to A3 restaurant with ancillary A5 takeaway was considered acceptable in principle and that remains the case, albeit now falling within Use Class E.
- 6.2 Officers worked closely with the applicant during the course of the 2018 application to arrive at a positive recommendation. However, the development was subsequently commenced without discharging the conditions, furthermore the works were not undertaken in accordance with the approved plans. This resulted in a poor visual appearance and gave rise to concerns over noise and odours from the kitchen extraction equipment.
- 6.3 The works that have taken place are considered to be unauthorised and are subject to the 2020 Enforcement Notice. This current application seeks planning permission for largely the same as that approved under application 180273 but with some changes to details including the centrally located door to the shopfront and revised material specification scheme. Retrospective approval is also sought for a kitchen extraction system that has recently been installed. However, this flue has not been shown on the proposed plans.

Design and Heritage

- 6.4 The unauthorised works have resulted in a poor-quality appearance and are considered unacceptable in terms of the impact on the character and appearance of the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area.

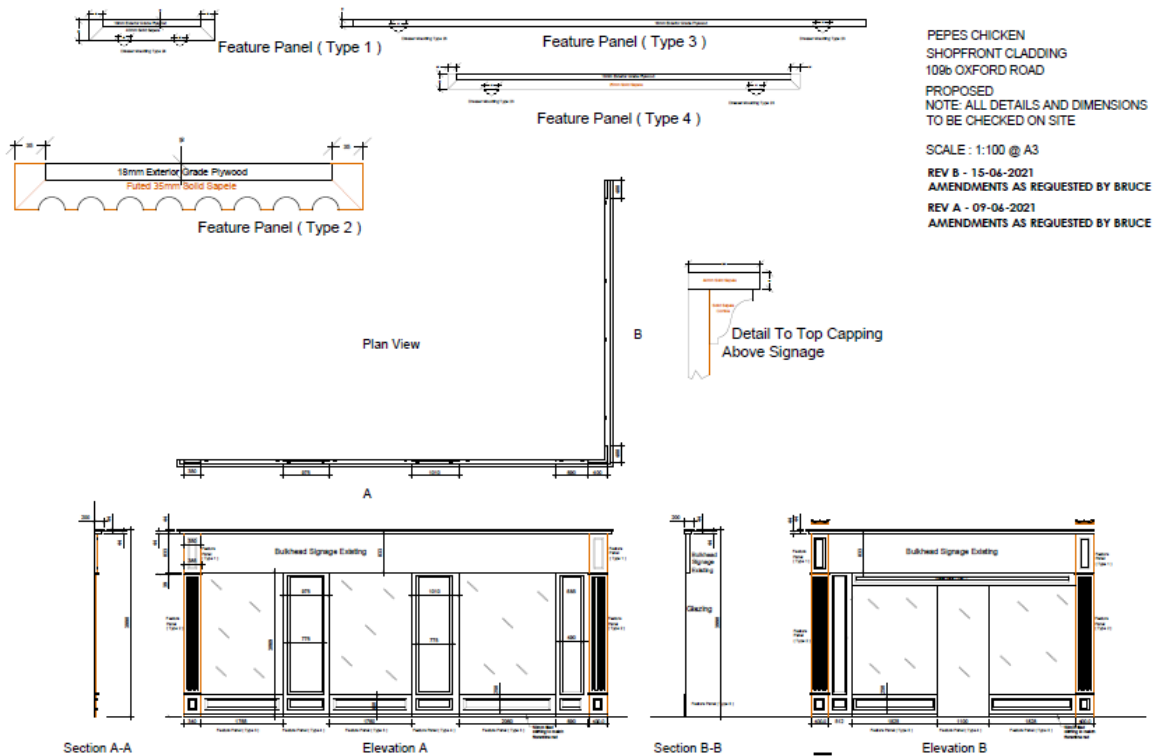
This contrasts with the permission (180273) which represented a clear improvement to the appearance of the original 'Ladbroke's' building which had a notably poor appearance and did not contribute positively to the Conservation Area. The specific areas of breach are highlighted as follows:

- The main front door of the shopfront has been installed centrally rather than to the left-hand side (viewed from the street) as shown on the previously approved drawings;
- The corbel moulding shown on the previously approved drawings is missing from the pilasters;
- The timber panel above the pilaster corbel shown on the previously approved drawings (at fascia level) is missing;
- A coated metal infill panel has been installed under the fascia in place of the transom light glazing shown on the previously approved drawings;
- The timber shopfront panelling shown on the previously approved drawings is missing from much of the shopfront and a painted render finish with pinned-on timber beading has been applied instead;
- The 'ornate panelling' as annotated on the previously approved drawings, where installed, consists of a manufactured timber board which grooves routed out and painted;
- The surfacing materials for the front forecourt are not the same as that shown on the previously approved drawings;
- The opening on the flank elevation shown on the previously approved drawings to be closed off with brickwork remains in use for extraction;
- Two air conditioning condensers have been mounted to the rear elevation, the position of one obstructs the installation of the air supply system acoustic louvre grille as previously approved.

- 6.5 With specific regard to the shopfront, the proposed plans largely seek to address the above and revert to a design which more closely reflects what was originally granted permission. It is proposed to keep the front door centrally as installed rather than revert to the side and this is considered acceptable, resulting in a balanced composition and being similar to other shopfronts along this part of Oxford Road.
- 6.6 It is also no longer proposed to block up the opening on the flank elevation adjacent Zinzan Street. The applicant has stated that this is only for fresh air intake and this is the same as that for application 201585 at 109a Oxford Road. Given this and that this is an existing small-scale opening, this is not considered unacceptable.
- 6.7 Further details of the external architectural appearance have been submitted during the course of the application as follows:
- a sample of the Herringbone brick paving (red) for the front of the shop;
 - a colour chart depicting the 'Florentine' red proposed to paint the timber columns and panels; and
 - a more detailed drawing depicting the timber panel detail (using Solid Sapele timber)



Paving sample and colour chart



Timber panel detail

- 6.8 Further to the above, the applicant has provided a final drawing of the shopfront which also now includes the proposed timber front door painted Florentine red.
- 6.9 It is considered, in consultation with the Council’s Conservation and Urban Design Officer, that with specific regard to the shopfront, the proposals would represent an opportunity to enhance this building, with the ground floor

Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

colours sympathetic to the upper floor and the shopfront restored to a more traditional form which respects the age and character of the host building. Similarly, the proposal to replace the tarmac with a charcoal colour paving would also improve the appearance when viewed from Oxford Road.

6.10 Further to the above, however, the photos below show a flue that has recently been installed on the rear elevation (red arrow below):



Classification: UNCLASSIFIED

Page 78

- 6.11 This flue is not shown on the plans and is unauthorised. As can be seen above, although the extraction flue is located on the rear elevation it is still clearly visible from the car park and access road at the rear of the site, as well as from wider views in the street scene and Conservation Area.
- 6.12 In such a highly visible location, the large extraction flue, due to its bulk, siting and appearance, results in a prominent and unattractive addition that fails to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.
- 6.13 The extract flue to the rear of the building, due to its excessive scale, unsympathetic design and prominent siting is an obtrusive feature which fails to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area.
- 6.14 In these circumstances paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework says that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal. Having a building in use is advantageous, but not if it necessitates harmful alterations, as in this case. Whilst it is acknowledged that most restaurants and take-away businesses require a commercial flue, this appears excessively large and it is not clear that it is successful in mitigating against odours, as discussed elsewhere in this report. As such, any weight attributed to the need for such a business to have such a large flue does not overcome the harm identified or provide an acceptable justification for the retention of a flue that is harmful to the conservation area.
- 6.15 A large extraction unit/flue was originally proposed to the rear of the building at the time of the original application 180273, albeit sited in a different location at the rear. That was removed from the plans and replaced with a more discreet extraction system at a lower level, not readily visible from the public domain and not considered to result in any adverse effect on the character and appearance of the conservation area. At the time of the 2018 Planning Application Committee meeting, the applicant obtained planning permission on the basis that that this would be achievable in mitigating against noise and odour. It is, therefore, disappointing that this has not happened and instead another bulky, prominent flue has been installed.
- 6.16 Whilst the shopfront proposal is considered acceptable in design and heritage terms, the flue fails to preserve the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Whilst the harm is less than substantial it is not sufficiently outweighed by any public benefits and noting odour matters addressed elsewhere in this report. This would be contrary to Policies CC7, EN1 and EN3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019. The unauthorised flue is not shown on the submitted drawings for which approval is being sought. It would therefore not form a reason for refusal in the case of the current application and instead would be a matter to be resolved through Planning Enforcement action.

Impact on neighbouring amenity (including environmental protection matters)

- 6.17 Policy CC8 seeks to prevent development from having a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing residential properties through noise and

disturbance, dust, smells, fumes and vibrations. Policy EN17 requires that any noise generating equipment should be designed to read at least 10dBA below the existing background level as measured at the nearest sensitive receptor.

- 6.18 The main issue in terms of residential amenity is noise and odours from the extraction equipment associated with the use. It is not uncommon for restaurants and hot food takeaways to be located close to residential accommodation and for fumes and smells to be dealt with by means of extraction equipment. It is noted that in this regard, whilst planning application 180273 included a specific condition requiring further ventilation and extraction details to be submitted prior to works commencing, these details were not provided. Furthermore, there were subsequently concerns that the system that had been installed does not satisfactorily control odour and noise emissions.
- 6.19 This application had sought to address the situation and updated odour and noise assessments, confirming additional measures and remedial works that have been undertaken, were submitted. However, these assessments rely on the unauthorised flue that has been installed that, as above, is not shown on the plans and is considered unacceptable in design and heritage terms.
- 6.20 Environmental Protection Officers have advised that, based on the documents provided, it should be the case that odour would be controlled acceptably and without the previous issues arising. However, even if the design of the flue was considered acceptable (it is not), officers (including Environmental Protection officers) have noted on recent site visits that cooking smells are still readily noticeable. There is therefore also uncertainty as to whether the flue has been correctly installed and if it has, whether the specification of the system is in fact sufficient in practice to satisfactorily control odour given odour emissions that currently remain.
- 6.21 It remains far from clear as to the extent of the shortcomings of the extract system which this retrospective application seeks to retain as shown on the plans (i.e. *without* the recently added flue), or the effectiveness of the recently added flue element at the rear, and if any works could be carried out to bring it up to the required standard. Indeed, it may not be possible to rectify the existing system, and if it were there is no guarantee that the remedies would be acceptable in terms of appearance. A wholly different system -may be required. Given the considerable degree of uncertainty that exists, it is considered that the current application fails to demonstrate that the retention of the existing system would avoid harm to the amenity of adjoining dwellings in terms of noise and odour, contrary to policies CC8, CR6, EN16 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
- 6.22 Despite the fundamental concern over the extraction equipment identified above, other relevant matters include the proposed hours of use of the premises. These remains as previously approved under application 180273: 11:30-23:00 Sunday - Thursday and 11:30 - 23:30 Friday-Saturday. This is not considered unreasonable given the operating hours of other nearby establishments and this could be secured by condition. The use of the premises incorporating hot food takeaway might generate additional usage over and above the current use, especially in the evening hours, however, it is not considered that this would be so significant as to be detrimental to neighbouring residential properties especially in view of the existing hot food

takeaway businesses nearby in this parade of shops which are of a similar character.

Highway Matters

- 6.23 This site is situated on A329 Oxford Road which is a main transport corridor in and out of Reading and is a busy public transport route between central Reading and the west. It is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading.
- 6.24 Oxford Road and the surrounding road network all have extensive parking restrictions preventing on-street parking. A residents' permit parking scheme operates in the area thereby restricting and monitoring unauthorised parking.
- 6.25 In accordance with the Council's adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the proposed restaurant use would generate a parking demand of 1 space per 5sqm whereas the proposed take-away use would generate a parking demand of 1 space per 40sqm. There is no off-street parking associated with the site however the parking demand generated by the proposal could be suitably accommodated within the short stay parking bays on Oxford Road and nearby public car parks as is currently the case with other similar uses in the street.
- 6.26 There are therefore considered to be no transport objections to the proposals in accordance with Local Plan Policies TR1, TR3 and TR5 and the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD 2011.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Having regard to the Development Plan, material considerations and all matters raised, the Local Planning Authority considers that, whilst the proposals for the replacement shopfront would visually enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area, insufficient evidence is available within the application to demonstrate that the construction, odour control measures, noise characteristics, and running specifications of the existing kitchen extract flue would avoid causing noise, disturbance and unpleasant odours to occupiers of surrounding dwellings. It has also not been established what, if any, alterations could be made to the system to ensure that it performs in such a way as to avoid harm to the amenity of these neighbouring dwellings. Furthermore, the flue that has been installed which it appears is being relied upon to reduce noise and odour (although its effectiveness remains unproven) results in harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and should be removed. The development is therefore contrary to Policies CC8, CR6, EN1, EN3, EN16 and EN17 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and is recommended for refusal on that basis.

Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys

Proposed Floor Plan and Elevations



Proposed Elevations

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH & NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29/03/2023

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 220957 / REG3

Address: 26-90 Reading Bus Garage, Great Knollys Street

Proposal: Installation of solar PV panels and associated equipment at Reading Bus Depot. The PV panels will be situated on the existing roof of the main building at the Depot. It is proposed to install a maximum of 1402 solar PV panels with approximate dimension 1m x 1.75m.

Applicant: Reading Buses Canteen

Deadline: 29/03/2023

extension of time yet to be agreed

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT

Conditions:

Time Limit (Standard)

Approved Plans

Materials as per application/forms

The solar PV installed on the building shall, so far as practicable, be sited so as to minimise its effect on the external appearance of the building;

The solar PV shall, so far as practicable, be sited so as to minimise its effect on the railway line to the rear of the site.

Informatives:

Positive and proactive requirement

Terms and conditions

This is a planning permission only and the requirements of other legislation will apply
National Railway Agreement required

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The application site is at the Reading bus depot, situated between the railway embankment of the Reading - Basingstoke railway line and Great Knollys Street. The bus depot is a long building, centrally located within the site, running from the front of the site to the railway embankment sited at a higher level at the rear. The height of the bus depot is lower in height next to the railway and is set away from neighbouring buildings. There is a narrow strip of solar panels on a flat roof at the front of the depot along Great Knollys Street.

1.2 There is some vegetation and trees that partially obscure part of the bus depot roof from the railway line.

Site Location Plan



2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 The proposal is to install a maximum of 1402 solar PV panels on the sloping existing roof, with associated equipment on the main building at the depot. The PV panels will measure approximately 1m x 1.75m. The proposed PV system will be installed on the existing main bus depot roof and will align with the existing pitch of the roof. The panels will be 95mm above the current height of the roof. The solar PV system would not result in a change of use or footprint of the building.
- 2.2 The renewable energy to be generated by the solar panels will be supplied directly to the bus depot, to increase the amount of renewable energy used on-site in the offices and workshop buildings. Any excess electricity will be exported to the local electricity network and the works will contribute towards Reading achieving net zero carbon operations.
- 2.3 The solar panel will be visible from some public areas, particularly to the railway at the rear of the site. A glint and glare report has been submitted, with consultation sought and feedback received from National rail, stating that there would be a low risk of impact to the railway.
- 2.4 Reading Community Energy Society proposes to install Solar PV panels in collaboration with Reading buses and Reading Borough Council.
- 2.5 Submitted Plans and Documentation:
 - ~~PV roof layout~~
 - ~~PV Mounting elevation~~
 - ~~Location Plan~~
 - CIL
 As received 30 June 2022

Proposed west elevation
Proposed east elevation
Proposed north and south elevation
Existing west elevation
Existing east elevation
Existing north and south elevation
PV Mounting elevation
PV Panel layout
Location plan
Solar Photovoltaic lint and Glare study, Reading bus depot, juju Solar, September 2019, Pagerpower
Text from an email from a Senior Asset Protection Engineer at network rail stating that following a review of the glint and glare report, it 'concluded that it is unlikely that solar panels on the bus garage roof would result in distracting solar glare affecting train drivers'. However that in the remote instance that panels cause a significant distraction, Network rail may ask for remedial measures
Planning statement
As received 5 December 2022

Planning statement - purpose of the application for solar panels
As received 1 February 2023

3. **PLANNING HISTORY**

960015 The erection of a new bus depot, associated car parking and access.
Permitted 23/12/1996
190127 Notification for prior approval for the Installation of Solar PV -
Withdrawn
191009 Notification for prior approval for the Installation of Solar PV -
Refused 9/08/2019

4. **CONSULTATIONS**

4.1 **Statutory**

None

4.2 **Non-statutory**

- RBC Transport Development Control has no objections to the application as the solar panels will have no impact on highway users.
- National Rail have no objections to the proposal. There would be a requirement to engage with the National Rail Asset protection team and to enter into a Basic Asset Protection Agreement, if required with a minimum of 3 months notice before works commence. It is advised that any reflective material or solar panel component should not interfere with the line of sight of train drivers and any potential for glare or reflection of light from the panels that may impact upon signalling **must** be eliminated. The glint and glare study has assessed the possible effects upon railway operations and signals at Reading and Reading West train stations to be low with no mitigation needed. Other issues raised were the distance of the solar panels from the railway, whether any vegetation would be required and consideration of construction traffic.

- RBC Building Control - No objection, although it was advised that before the commencement of works that the applicant investigates whether the roof would be able to structurally support the weight of the solar panels proposed.

4.3 Public

Notification letters were sent to nearby occupants and businesses. A site notice was displayed at the site. No comments have been received.

5. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which also states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

5.2 The development plan for this Local Planning Authority is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant policies are:

- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

APPRAISAL

The main matters to be considered are as follows:

- Design considerations and effect on character
- Safety implications and Impact on the railway line
- Other Matters

Design considerations and effect on character and amenity

6.1 Policy CC2 states that proposals will be acceptable where the design of buildings and site layouts use energy and other natural resources appropriately efficiently, and with care and take account of the effects of climate change. The proposal has been designed to produce clean electricity from a renewable source in an attempt to reduce the amount of carbon dioxide created by the building. A large majority of the energy consumed by the building would be provided by the proposed solar panels. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy CC2 and TR1 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

6.2 Policy CC7 states that development should be of a high quality design that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area of Reading in which is located. The solar panels are low profile and will be fitted against the roof line of the existing building which is set back from the public realm. Whilst the panels would be visible from the public realm, it is not considered

that the addition of the panels would be detrimental to either the host building or surrounding area. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy CC7 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

- 6.3 The proposed development would not result in harm to the amenity of neighbouring properties in terms of overbearing impact or other disturbance. The proposal is therefore in accordance with Policy CC8 of the Reading Local Plan 2019.

Safety implications and Impact on the railway line

- 6.4 Policy TR1 seeks to ensure an adequate level of accessibility and safety by all nodes of transport, particularly by public transport. Concerns were raised by the case officer regarding the impact of the solar panel on the railway line due to the sloping gradient of the bus depot roof and any potential risks to public safety. The railway line is set at a higher level than the bus depot, with the roof in a line of sight from certain points along the railway line. The height of the bus depot roof is lower at the rear of the site next to the railway and the end of the roof has mechanical equipment that separates the solar panels from the end of the building. To address concerns raised the agent commissioned a Glint and Glare report. Previous prior approval planning applications proposing solar panels have been withdrawn and refused due to a lack of glint and glare analysis or elevations to scale being provided.
- 6.5 The solar panels have been assessed for their impact on the safety of the railway line to the rear, with assessments undertaken of the potential for solar reflections towards receptors at points along the railway line in the Glint and Glare report submitted. Network Rail have reviewed the report and considered the works to be of low risk and have no objections to the works proposed or the proposed location of the solar panels. There are no significant indicators that a risk to network rail has been identified.
- 6.6 If subsequent to the installation of the solar panels, it is found that the solar panels have a detrimental impact on a train driver's field of view, any remedial works would not be covered under the planning permission, if approved. It is strongly advised that the applicant contact the Network Rail Asset Protection team to determine whether a Basic Asset Protection Agreement is required. Any remediation would be subject to alternative Health and Safety legislation and National Rail legislative requirements.

Other Matters

- 6.7 There is an existing tree line and vegetation along the rear boundary of the bus depot and the works will not result in a loss of biodiversity. As such no further planting is proposed, which could detrimentally impact the railway line.
- 6.8 There is sufficient space at the bus depot for the storage of materials and the accommodation of construction vehicles on site. The agent has confirmed that structural surveys will be undertaken to ensure that the roof can structurally support the weight of the solar panels if planning permission is granted before any works commence.

Equalities Impact

- 6.9 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence

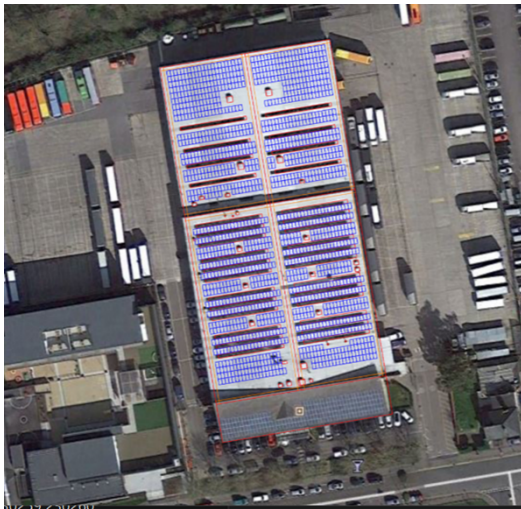
(including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified in the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to the particular planning application. Therefore, In terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

7. CONCLUSION

7.1 The proposed roof mounted solar photovoltaic (PV) panels, are considered to be acceptable. This proposal has been carefully considered in the context of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and supplementary planning documents. The recommendation is shown above. It is advised that the applicant contacts the National Rail Asset protection team before any works commence to ensure that any requirements are undertaken in respect of the safety of users of National Rail. An informative is recommended as this falls outside of relevant planning legislation.

Case Officer: Nathalie Weekes

Proposed Solar PV layout



Glint and glare report train driver receptor locations reviewed p19



Figure 5 - Train driver receptor location

Site photos



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29 March 2023

Ward: Abbey

App No.: 221563/FUL

Address: 1 Epping Close, Reading

Proposals: Proposed demolition of 8 garages and construction of 2 x 3 bedroom residential units.

Applicant: Metrus Ltd

Deadline: 28th March 2023

RECOMMENDATION:

REFUSE planning permission for the following reasons:

1. The proposed development, due to its excessive scale, site coverage, layout and insufficient landscaped areas would represent a cramped overdevelopment of the site which fails to accommodate built form, parking areas and landscaping in a manner that enhances the character and appearance of the area. As such the proposal would be harmful to the appearance of the street scene and would fail to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CC7, EN1, EN3 and EN6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
2. The proposed development, due to its uncharacteristic appearance, inappropriate external materials, architectural form, scale and prominence would appear as an inappropriate and unsympathetic development that would not be of a sufficient high quality design and fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CC7, EN1, EN3 and EN6 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
3. The proposed development, due to its scale and siting in relation to neighbouring dwellings and private gardens to the rear of the site, would result in a visually dominant and overbearing impact with consequent harm to the amenity of neighbouring occupiers. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
4. The proposed dwellings would receive insufficient interior daylight due to their internal layout, single aspect design and overshadowing from trees and balconies. This would result in a detrimental impact to the living environment of future occupiers. This would be contrary to Policy CC8 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
5. The proposed development, due to the minimal size and inappropriate siting of the gardens, combined with the overshadowing from trees on and adjacent the site, would not provide adequate and functional outdoor private amenity space for future occupiers. This would also not reflect the size or character of private residential gardens in the surrounding area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies CC7 and H10 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
6. The proposed development would result in an unjustified loss of parking provision for the residents of Epping Close. This would result in on-street parking that would adversely affect road safety and the flow of traffic. The proposal is therefore

contrary to Policy TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

7. The proposed vehicular parking layout would provide insufficient parking to serve the new dwellings and would not comply with the Parking Standards and Design SPD in respect of vehicle parking. This would result in on-street parking that would adversely affect road safety and the flow of traffic. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies TR3 and TR5 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
8. The proposed development would result in the loss of 4 trees of amenity value and would be likely to result in pressure to prune or fell those trees shown to be retained. In addition, the development fails to provide acceptable additional and replacement tree planting and soft landscaping with consequent harm to the visual amenity, character and appearance of the conservation area, biodiversity and environmental quality of the area. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies CC7, EN3 and EN14 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
9. The proposal has failed to demonstrate that the proposal would not disrupt the roosting environment of bats within existing trees, with consequent failure to demonstrate there would be no adverse effect on wildlife and protected species and the ecological value of the site. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
10. The development has failed to demonstrate that there would be no net loss of biodiversity or that a biodiversity net gain would be achieved, through ecological enhancements either on or off site. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policy EN12 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
11. In the absence of a completed legal agreement to secure an acceptable contribution towards the provision of Affordable Housing, the proposal fails to contribute adequately to the housing needs of Reading Borough. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies H3 and CC9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 and the Council's Adopted Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Document 2021.

Informatives

1. Plans refused
2. Positive and proactive
3. Without prejudice to any future appeal
4. CIL
5. Pre-app

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site relates to a block of 8 garages located to the north boundary of Epping Close. There is a change in site levels and the site slopes downwards to the north towards Baker Street, to the rear.
- 1.2 The site is within the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area. There are listed buildings to the north, fronting Baker Street.
- 1.3 Epping Close features contemporary mid-twentieth century blocks of flats

- 1.4 The site is located within an air quality management area and is within an area of potential contaminated land.
- 1.5 This application is being reported to committee at the request of Councillors Page and Rowland, in view of a number of concerned representations received from nearby residents as well as concerns raised over parking.
- 1.6 The location of the site in relation to the wider urban area is shown below, together with a site photograph and aerial view.



Aerial view



Site Photograph - looking towards garages and 57 Baker Street Development



- 1.7 This application has been called-in for Committee determination at the request of Councillors Page and Rowland due to concerns over loss of the

garages, increased traffic and impact on the Conservation Area and in view of a number of concerned representations received from members of the public.

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 Full Planning Permission is sought for two 3-bedroom dwellings following demolition of the existing garages.

2.2 Two car parking spaces are proposed, one for each dwelling.

2.3 It is proposed to remove four trees, with two replacement trees proposed.

2.4 The proposed materials would include:

- White render
- Buff yellow brickwork
- Cedar boarding
- Cedar doors
- Aluminium windows
- Aluminium fascia
- Glass balustrading

2.5 The proposal would be a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) liable development. The applicant has provided the CIL Additional Information Form. Based on the information provided by the applicant and the 2023 CIL rate, this is estimated to amount to £12,111.85 (172m² of the proposals - 99.5m² (buildings to be demolished) x £120 per m² x 2022 indexation (£167.06)). If the scheme had been acceptable an informative would have been attached to the decision notice to advise the applicant of their responsibilities in this respect.

2.6 SUBMITTED PLANS AND DOCUMENTS:

Location and Block Plans PL-101 Rev A
Existing Site Plan PL-102 Rev A
Proposed Site Plan PL-104
Proposed Elevations Sheet 2 showing 57 Baker Street PL-109 Rev A
Proposed Cross Section AA showing 57 Baker Street PL-110 Rev A
Received 15th March 2023

Existing Garage Elevations PL103
Proposed Ground Floor Plan PL-105 Rev A
Proposed First Floor Plan PL-106 Rev A
Proposed Roof Plan PL-107 Rev A
Proposed Elevations Sheet 1 PL108
Proposed Materials PL-111
Proposed CIL Drawing PL-112

Arboricultural Impact Assessment dated 11th October 2022
Affordable Housing Statement
Daylight and Sunlight Report dated 25th November 2021
Design and Access, Planning and Sustainability Statement
Small Site Metric Beta Test
Tree Survey
Received 25th January 2023

Heritage Statement
Received 31st January 2023

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 None at the site

Other Nearby Sites of Relevance

57 Baker Street

3.2 180624/FUL - Erection of two 2/3 storey buildings to provide 9 (2x2-bed and 7x3-bed) residential units (Class C3), 9 parking spaces, landscaping and associated works. Permitted and constructed.

4. CONSULTATIONS

Internal Consultees

Conservation and Urban Design Officer (CUDO)

4.1 OBJECT due to impact on character and appearance of Conservation Area. Discussed further below.

Natural Environment

4.2 OBJECT due to loss of trees, pressure to prune those to be retained and insufficient tree planting and soft landscaping. Discussed further below.

Ecology

4.3 OBJECT due to possible impact on roosting bats in trees to be removed and failure to demonstrate net gain in biodiversity. Discussed further below.

Transport

4.4 OBJECT due to loss of garages and insufficient parking for future occupiers. Discussed further below.

Environmental Protection

4.5 No objection submission to conditions in respect of contaminated land. Discussed further below.

External Consultees

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)

4.6 No comments received.

5. Publicity

5.1 Neighbour letters were sent to the occupiers of nearby properties and site notices were displayed. Advertised in local press on 13th February 2023.

5.2 22 letters of objection received (3 from the same property) concerned with (in summary):

Inaccurate plans not showing Baker Street/Fox Talbot development
Loss of garage parking to Epping Close residents
Insufficient parking for future occupiers
Loss of privacy/light/overbearing

Out of character with pattern of development
Cramped/overdevelopment
Poor design/out of character with area/conservation area
Lack of amenity space
Loss of trees/greenery
Trees to be felled outside red line and ownership
Insufficient tree planting/soft landscaping
Environmental harm
Impact on wildlife
Issues with bins/vermin
Opportunistic crime
Noise and disturbance from construction process
Loss of property value

6. RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

6.1 Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the LPA to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Area.

6.2 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which means 'approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay' (NPPF paragraph 11).

National Planning Policy Framework 2021 National Planning Guidance 2014 onwards

6.3 The relevant sections of the NPPF are:

Section 2 - Achieving Sustainable Development
Section 8 - Promoting Healthy and Safe Communities
Section 9 - Promoting Sustainable Transport
Section 11 - Making Effective Use of Land
Section 12 - Achieving Well-Designed Places
Section 15 - Conserving and Enhancing the Natural Environment
Section 16 - Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment

6.4 **Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019):**

CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
CC7: Design and the Public Realm
CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
CC9: Securing Infrastructure
EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
EN3: Enhancement of Conservation Areas
EN6: New Development in a Historic Context

EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
EN15: Air Quality
EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
H1: Provision of Housing
H2: Density and Mix
H3: Affordable Housing
H5: Standards for New Housing
H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
H11: Development of Private Residential Gardens
TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

6.5 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

Affordable Housing SPD (2021)
Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD (2011)
Revised SPD on Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2019)
Sustainable Design and Construction SPD (2019)

Other relevant documentation / guidance / legislation

Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area Appraisal (2010)
Historic England Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 1: Conservation Area Designation, Appraisal and Management (Historic England, 2016)
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 3: The Setting of Heritage Assets (Historic England, 2015b)
Principles of Conservation (Historic England, 2008)
Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (British Standards Publication BS 7913:2013, 2015)
DCLG Technical housing standards - nationally described space standards (2015)
Reading Tree Strategy (2021)
Biodiversity Action Plan (2021)
National Design Guide: Planning practice for beautiful, enduring and successful places (2019)

7. APPRAISAL

Land Use Matters

- 7.1 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) state that LPAs should “encourages the effective use of land by reusing land that has been previously developed (brownfield land) provided that it is not of high environmental value”.
- 7.2 From a purely land use perspective, provision of housing would align with the broad objectives of Policy H1 (Provision of Housing) in assisting meeting annual housing needs. However, this is subject to the more detailed consideration of relevant Local Plan policies and the context of the application site. As the remainder of this report demonstrates, the proposal has failed to satisfactorily meet a number of other policy criteria.

Design, Impact on Heritage Assets and Street Scene

- 7.3 Policies CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) and H11 (Development of Private and Residential Gardens) both seek to ensure that new development enhances and preserves the local character. Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) states that “the design of outdoor areas will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity”.
- 7.4 The site lies within the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area and as such there is a duty imposed by Section 72(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requiring decision makers to have special regards to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a Conservation Area. This is reflected in Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) which states that historic features and areas of historic importance and other elements of the historic environment, including their settings, will be protected and where appropriate enhanced. Policy EN3 (Enhancement of Conservation Areas) requires that the special interest, character and architecture of Conservation Areas will be conserved and enhanced and that development proposals within Conservation Areas must make a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness. Further to this, Policy EN6 (New Development in an Historic Context) states that in areas characterised by heritage assets, the historic environment will inform and shape new development. The Council will, therefore, have regard to both the quality of the townscape and the quality and interest of the area, rather than solely that of the individual building.
- 7.5 Paragraph 130 of the NPPF 2019 details that decisions should ensure that developments are visually attractive as a result of good architecture, layout and appropriate and effective landscaping and are sympathetic to local character including the surrounding built environment
- 7.6 Paragraph 199 of the NPPF 2019 details that when considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset’s conservation (and the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance.
- 7.7 The National Design Guidance identifies 10 key components for good design and of particular note is the characteristic of ‘Context’ and it states that “well designed new development responds positively to the features of the site itself and the surrounding context beyond the site boundary. It should enhance positive qualities and improve negative ones.” Additionally, there is specific reference to ‘views inwards and outwards’.
- 7.8 The existing garage block is not particularly attractive in appearance, nor is it of any architectural or historic interest. That said, due to its low height and position within Epping Close, the garage block is unobtrusive within the street scene. Any replacement building must be appropriate in all other aspects (which is detailed further below). In this instance there are significant concerns with the proposals, which are not considered to preserve or enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. Furthermore, the proposed scale and layout would also result in other concerns as set out below.

- 7.9 As can be seen from the proposed site plan, the proposed building would be located immediately adjacent the north and west boundary, with no relief, effectively filling the site to its margins such that it would appear cramped and overdeveloped. Whilst indicative soft landscaping is shown, there would be a distinct dominance of built form and hardstanding with little space for meaningful soft landscaping. As a consequence of the siting of the dwellings, the proposed garden areas would be located to the front of the site. This would be out of keeping with the prevailing pattern of development and the need for which is symptomatic of the overdeveloped nature of the site and the consequential introduction of inappropriate design and layout elements.
- 7.10 Further to the above, the Conservation Area Appraisal notes, at paragraph 6.3.6 that a negative feature of this character area is “the creation of hardstandings for bins in front gardens”. The front garden areas would largely be made up by patio rather than lawn which does little to soften the frontage and indeed would house the bins, which, as above, is considered a negative design response.
- 7.11 Another negative feature of this character area as noted at paragraph 4.3 is that “further greening is desirable throughout the Conservation Area.”. As above, there is limited space for meaningful soft landscaping and the front of the site would largely comprise of hardstanding presenting a cramped layout in terms of scale and the relationship between buildings, parking areas and landscaping within the site.
- 7.12 In terms of the design and appearance of the proposal, the applicant contends that the contemporary design would make a positive contribution to - and sit comfortably in - the conservation area. Although modern and innovative design is often welcome this is subject to the fundamentals of scale, layout and landscaping, as well as appearance being acceptable within a suitable location and context and in this instance of a high quality design that is well related to the character of the Conservation Area.
- 7.13 Due to the constraints of the site, the design approach has been forced to fit the site. The side elevations lack architectural detailing, visual interest and refinement, presenting blank elevations which would be unattractive and would have a poor appearance - and to a lesser extent the same with the rear elevations. The need to restrict the height of the building at the rear highlights the awkwardness of the site layout and the incompatibility of the design with the character of the street scene and wider conservation area. The proposed sedum roof could add visual interest to the proposal; however, it would not be a clearly visible element of the scheme when viewed from the front of the site and as discussed elsewhere in this report it is not clear whether its construction would even be possible. In overall terms, the proposed design is considered to offer a bland appearance. The proposed modern materials (glass, vertical timber panelling, zinc fascias) are not considered sufficient in themselves to create a visually interesting building or to mitigate the shortcomings of the fundamentals of the design. The proposal fails to provide replacement-built form of a high quality design and therefore cannot be considered to enhance the character and appearance of the conservation area.
- 7.14 Although the proposed building would have a limited wider visibility owing to its set back positioning within Epping Close, it would nonetheless be visible when passing and when viewed from Baker Street development at

the rear and from the forecourt of the flats at Epping Close. Thus, it would have a cramped and incongruous appearance within the street scene that would not reflect the prevailing pattern or character of development.

- 7.15 The unacceptable impact of the proposals would be relatively localised in comparison to the total size of the Conservation Area and as such the harm to the Conservation Area identified above would be less than substantial. In these circumstances paragraph 202 of the National Planning Policy Framework says that the harm should be weighed against the public benefits of the proposal.
- 7.16 The public benefits of the proposal in this case lie in the provision of two units of accommodation in an accessible location. In addition, there would be some limited economic benefit attached to the development. Nevertheless, in weighing up the planning merits of the proposals and applying a critical planning balance, it is considered that the benefit of the contribution to the supply of housing (two 3-bed dwellings) is small and general in nature and that the need can be met elsewhere in the Borough. Consequently, it carries little weight when balanced against the failure of the proposal to preserving or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area and indeed the conclusion reached that the Conservation Area would be harmed by reason of the new building's cramped layout inappropriate appearance (as well as the loss of trees and absence of meaningful landscaping discussed below).
- 7.17 In conclusion on this point, it is not considered that the proposed development would preserve or enhance the appearance of this part of the Castle Hill/Russell Street/Oxford Road Conservation Area and its contribution to the designated area as a whole, and would fail to preserve or enhance local distinctiveness, contrary to Policies CC7, EN1, EN3, EN6 and H10 and of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Impact on Neighbour Amenity

- 7.18 Residential amenity is assessed against Policy CC8 which requires developments to not cause a detrimental impact on the living environment of existing properties in terms of: Privacy and overlooking; Access to sunlight and daylight; Visual dominance and overbearing; Harm to outlook; Noise and disturbance; Artificial lighting; Vibration; Dust and fumes; Smell; and Crime and safety.
- 7.19 As above, the development to the rear of the site at Baker Street, is complete. Epping Close is at a higher level than the properties to the rear and there would only be a distance of 4.6m back-to-back between the proposed dwellings and the rear of these properties, with the proposals immediately abutting the rear gardens. Given this limited separation distance, combined with the height of the proposed development this is considered to result in an unacceptable visually dominant and overbearing impact to occupiers of these properties and their private garden spaces.
- 7.20 A Daylight and Sunlight Report has been submitted with the application. This acknowledges that the rear gardens to the development at Baker Street are small. Indeed, the report considers that sunlight to some of these gardens is already limited due to the position and location of the existing single storey garages. The report concludes that these gardens would experience additional overshadowing as a consequence of the proposed

development. On this basis, combined with the above, it is clear that the proposals would result in harmful overbearing effects to neighbouring amenity.

- 7.21 The proposals are not considered to result in any significant material loss of light, privacy or overbearing effects to other nearby dwellings

Amenity of Future Occupiers

- 7.22 Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) seeks that all new housing is built to high standards. Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) seeks to protect future occupiers from the impacts of pollution and Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space) seeks that residential developments area provided with adequate private or communal outdoor amenity space.

- 7.23 The proposed living accommodation is considered in overall terms to be poor.

- 7.24 Policy H10 deals specifically with private and communal space and requires such space to allow for sitting out, children's play areas, home food production, green waste composting, refuse storage, drying space. *"The design of outdoor spaces will respect the size and character of other similar spaces in the vicinity"*.

- 7.25 The proposals include a first floor balcony to each dwelling, as well as small front garden/patio area. The submission also indicates that future occupiers would have use of the communal grounds around the existing block of flats. Whilst this is noted, it does not remove the need for suitable private on-site amenity space to provide for the increased number of dwellings.

- 7.26 The amount of amenity space would be very small. Furthermore, it would be sandwiched between the front of the dwellings and the proposed car parking, appearing cramped and offering a poor standard of amenity. The poor quality of the private amenity space would be further exacerbated by the presence of the existing trees to be retained, which would limit the amount of natural light to the front gardens - and as shown on the submitted shade path tree constraints plan. The relationship between the trees and proposed accommodation would likely lead to tension between their management and the living conditions of future occupiers. It is clear that the proposals would not allow for an attractive or enjoyable garden area.

- 7.27 The size of the proposed garden space also does not compare favorably with those in the vicinity. Whilst it is recognized that the development at 57 Baker Street to the rear also has smaller gardens, nevertheless, these are larger than those proposed, and would not be restricted by the same tree shadowing and there is also a shared mews garden between the two terraces at that site. Given the size and quality of the amenity space proposed, it is considered that the private amenity space is not adequate for the proposed dwellings.

- 7.28 The existing trees would also impact on light levels to future occupiers of the western dwelling, given the close proximity and shade path of the trees as indicated. Furthermore, light levels to the ground floor would be further restricted by the position and projection of the proposed first floor

balcony. Given this and the single aspect nature of the dwellings, it is considered that the dwellings would receive insufficient daylight levels internally resulting in harm to the amenity of future occupiers. It is noted that the Daylight/Sunlight Report submitted with the application does not assess the impact on future occupiers.

- 7.29 The proposed floor plans indicate that the third bedroom to each dwelling, located at first floor, would have a floorspace of 12.3m. However, given the shallow roof slope, the actual useable floorspace would appear to be considerably less than this, with a significant extent of the space affected by the slope of the roof. The size and roof slope would create an oppressive and confined living space, which as above, would also be compromised by shade from the trees and which would add further harm to the amenity of future occupiers.
- 7.30 It is also noted that the harm to amenity identified above further demonstrate that the proposals would be an overdevelopment of the site. Contrary to Policies CC5, CC8 and H10.

Transport Matters

- 7.31 Policies TR1 (Achieving the Transport Strategy), TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters) and TR5 (Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging) seek to address access, traffic, highway and parking relates matters relating to development.
- 7.32 The development is located in Zone 2, Primary Core Area, of the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. This zone directly surrounds the Central Core Area and extends to walking distances of 2 kilometres from the centre of Reading. Typically, this zone is well served by public transport, with buses continuing either into or out of the Central Core Area via this zone.
- 7.33 The applicant has stated that the garages proposed to be demolished are too small to be used adequately and so their loss would not result in a reduction in parking on the site. The applicant has stated that the garages are not allocated to the existing flats in Epping Close, but that a number are leased to local residents.
- 7.34 Conversely, the original decision notice for the development on Epping Close dated 1978, illustrates an approved parking layout which is associated with the flats. The decision notice included a condition that stipulated that the garage units “*shall be reserved exclusively for the use of the occupants of the flats hereby permitted*”. The reason for the condition was “*to provide and reserve adequate parking/garaging provision for the residents of the development hereby permitted*”. There are also additional dedicated parking bays located within the garage court that would also be lost, which has not been referenced by the applicant.
- 7.35 Previous Transport comments provided to the applicant had requested confirmation of the number of units leased and where the lease holders are from i.e. name of the road/ post code as they may not necessarily be from Epping Close. This information has not been provided with this application. Therefore, it has not been possible to fully establish if the garage units are leased by local residents. However, there would be a clear reduction in existing car parking spaces. Furthermore, concern over the loss of the garages is borne out by the strength of local objection to the application,

with a number of local residents of Epping Close confirming use of the garages.

- 7.36 In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development would require 2 off road parking spaces for each 3 bedroom dwelling. Submitted site plan Drawing PL 104 Rev A only illustrates 1 parking space for each dwelling, which falls short of the Council's Parking Standards. 2 parking spaces would be required for each dwelling to ensure that any overall flow of parking did not impact on the remaining area of parking/garages for residents of the adjacent flats.
- 7.37 The development site is located in an area designated as a Residents Parking Permit Area; Zone 08R. Under the Borough's current parking standards and given the above, the proposal is considered to generate unacceptable additional pressure for parking in the area. Given that parking would be below the Council's adopted standards, the Highway Authority are anxious to ensure that any development does not exacerbate this situation through creation of additional pressure for on-street parking in the local area.
- 7.38 Policy TR5 includes a requirement for each new house to be provided with an electric charging point. This has not been illustrated on plans. Should the application have otherwise been considered acceptable this could have been dealt with by way of a suitably worded condition.
- 7.39 In accordance with the adopted Parking SPD, the development would be required to provide a 2 parking spaces for each dwelling which should be in a conveniently located, lockable, covered store equipped with Sheffield type stands or a suitable equivalent. Cycle storage for the houses can be in the form of a secure garden shed. Detailed plans confirming that the cycle parking provision meets the Council's adopted standards in terms of layout would be required. Should the application have otherwise been considered acceptable this could have been dealt with by way of a suitably worded condition.
- 7.40 The Council's standards do allow for a reduced parking provision for residential development, where it can be satisfactorily demonstrated that there would be no detriment to highway safety as a result. No evidence has been submitted by the applicant to suggest that this would not be the case.
- 7.41 Given the above, the proposed development will intensify the use of the site above its current level and create additional pressure for on-street parking and the proposals are contrary to Policies TR1 and TR3.

Natural Environment - Trees, Landscaping and ecology

- 7.42 Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodland) seeks to extend the Borough's vegetation cover and that development should make provision for tree planting whilst Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) seeks that proposals should include appropriate landscaping. Given that the site is also located within a Conservation Area, an Air Quality Management Area, and within a low canopy cover ward, tree retention and planting is a high priority and proposals should demonstrate an appropriate level of greening and/or net gain in the number of trees.

- 7.43 There are a number of trees in and around the site. It is proposed to remove four trees, which all appear to be outside of the site boundary. Whilst there may be questions over the long term health of those trees, it is apparent that they currently contribute positively to the visual quality of the site and surroundings and would be difficult to replace. It is proposed to provide replacement planting of two silver birch trees (of a much smaller canopy species than those to be lost) this appears to be a consequence of the overdeveloped nature of the proposal which leaves little space for meaningful tree planting. As such, there would be a loss of overall greenery on the site. It is also clear that replacement planting would take time to establish and grow and would not be capable of a true replacement of the existing trees which currently characterise and add to the visual amenity of the site in the short to medium term.
- 7.44 A sedum roof is proposed; however, as discussed elsewhere in this report, it is not known whether the proposed roof would work in practice. Even if it were to be successful, it would not be readily visible and would offer little compensation for the loss of trees and lack of replanting opportunities referred to above.
- 7.45 Given the above concerns regarding insufficient lighting to the proposed accommodation, the development would be likely to result in pressure to prune trees to be retained due to overshadowing from their canopies, this would add additional harm to the already harmful loss of trees currently proposed.
- 7.46 The proposed development fails to demonstrate acceptable provision of replacement tree planting and soft landscaping with consequent harm to visual amenity, the character and appearance of the conservation area, air quality, biodiversity and environmental quality of the area, contrary to Policies CC7 and EN14. It would also be contrary to the objectives of the Tree Strategy and would not comply with the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD which states that 'development will not be permitted which would undermine current levels of tree cover as this is likely to be damaging to climate change adaptation strategies'.

Ecology

- 7.47 Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) seeks that development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and should provide for a net gain of biodiversity wherever possible by protecting, enhancing and incorporating features of biodiversity on and adjacent to development sites and by providing new tree planting and wildlife friendly landscaping and ecological enhancements wherever practicable.
- 7.48 The garages are unlikely to be suitable for use by roosting bats and the Council's Ecologist has confirmed that there would be no objection to the loss of the garages on ecology grounds. However, as above, the proposals include the loss of 4 trees. Two of these trees (Horse Chestnut and large Sycamore) could contain features suitable for roosting bats. A bat roost assessment of all trees to be removed would be required and this has not been submitted.
- 7.49 Given the nature of the scheme, it would also have been appropriate to ensure that ecological enhancements were provided, namely bird/bat boxes and wildlife friendly landscaping. The proposals include a swift box

and bat box to each side elevation of the proposed dwellings, which the applicant considers would result in an overall net gain in biodiversity. The Council's Ecologist has confirmed that the location proposed (height) would not be sufficient.

- 7.50 A sedum roof is also proposed, to enhance the biodiversity credentials of the scheme. The Council's Ecologist has confirmed that the sedum roof, proposed on a 1 in 3 gradient, would be unusually steep and the proposed sedum roof may in fact not be feasible. There are no detailed plans or sections through the roof and it is not clear if the building would be strong enough to support the roof proposed. The Council needs to be confident that the sedum roof could actually be installed and deliver the benefits suggested.
- 7.51 In overall terms, there is little proposed in the way of meaningful biodiversity enhancements and the lack of space for soft landscaping and the proposed loss of trees is a key contributor to this.
- 7.52 Furthermore, proposals should demonstrate how development would result in a 'net gain' in biodiversity units as measured using the DEFRA 3 Metric. Whilst a screenshot of a biodiversity net gain calculation has been provided, the DEFRA excel calculator has not been supplied and as such it is not possible to assess the validity of the valuation. Maps and habitat assessment sheets that clearly show the habitats before and after development would also be required and have not been provided.
- 7.53 Given the above, the applicant has failed to submit sufficient information for the Council to demonstrate that the ecological value of the site would be maintained and enhanced or to determine whether or not bats would be adversely affected. As such the proposals fail to demonstrate there would be no adverse effect on wildlife and protected species and the ecological value of the site. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies EN12 and H11 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

Affordable Housing

- 7.54 In accordance with Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) the proposed development, being for 2 additional dwellings, would be required to provide for an off-site affordable housing contribution equivalent of 10% of the Gross Development Value of the development.
- 7.55 The applicant stated they agreed in principle to enter into a legal agreement to secure a financial contribution and GDV valuations to calculate the contribution have been submitted. However, given that the proposal is not considered acceptable in other planning terms, the Council has not pursued the S106 legal agreement to secure the financial affordable housing provision. The proposal is therefore contrary to Policies H3 and CC9 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.
- 7.56 An informative will specify that this reason for refusal could be overcome, in the context of an acceptable scheme in all other respects, by entering into a s106 or unilateral undertaking.

Sustainability

- 7.57 Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) requires that all new build housing integrate additional measures for sustainability.
- 7.58 The submission indicates possible sustainable and energy efficient measures that would be used to reduce carbon emission and a building's carbon footprint; however, none have been specifically proposed.
- 7.59 Should the application have otherwise been recommended for approval, conditions would have been recommended to ensure the development meets the following requirements:
- Higher water efficiency standards of 110 litres per person per day; and
 - A 19% improvement over building regulations energy requirements
- 7.60 Although secured by planning condition, these new requirements would have been administered through the Building Regulations, with confirmation of compliance submitted to the LPA to discharge the condition.

Contaminated Land

- 7.61 Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) required that developments on land affected by contamination can be satisfactorily managed or remediated against so that it is suitable for the proposed use.
- 7.62 The site has the potential to have caused contaminated land e.g due to oil spills, storage of hazardous materials. The proposal could introduce new pollutant linkages between contaminated land and sensitive receptors at the site. Should the application have otherwise been supportable, Environmental Protection colleagues recommend the standard four-stage conditions to ensure that the possible presence of contamination is thoroughly investigated and removed/mitigated if necessary (3 of the conditions being pre-commencement).

Other Matters Raised in Representation

- 7.63 The material planning considerations have been addressed in the report above.
- 7.64 Land/property value is not a material planning consideration.
- 7.65 While the concerns of the local residents in terms of the disruption including noise, light pollution and traffic implications that may be caused by the construction works are noted, it is not the planning system's role to obstruct development on this basis. Inevitably, any construction works may lead to some temporary disruption. Ordinarily, the requirements of Environmental Health legislation would seek to limit any harm so far as reasonably practicable. The proposal is for a residential development and is unlikely to result in a significant increase in noise and pollution. Moreover, should the application have been recommended for approval a condition would have been attached requiring the need of a construction method statement to be provided prior to commencement of works to minimise any such disruption, as well as an hours of works condition.

Equalities Impact

7.66 When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the proposed development.

8 Overall Planning Balance and Conclusion

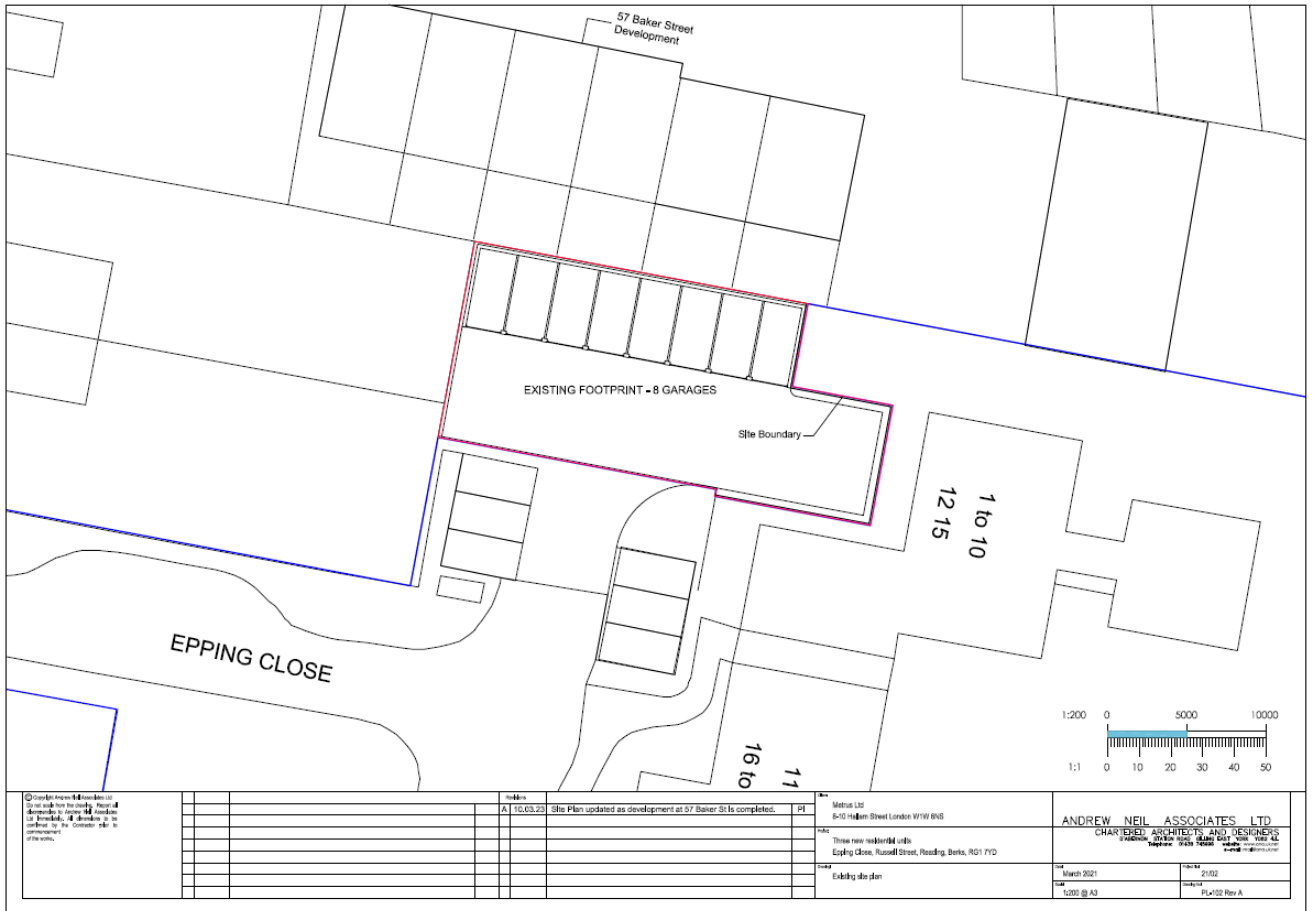
8.1 It is acknowledged that there would be some planning benefits associated with the proposed development, such as the provision of two additional residential dwellings to assist with the Borough housing targets. However, these are general benefits and not specific to the site and are likely to be delivered elsewhere. In contrast there are considered to be a number of significant harms arising from the scheme such as the scale and detailed design deficiencies and the loss of trees and greenery which result in the proposals being harmful to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area. In addition, there are significant concerns over some elements of the quality of accommodation proposed for future occupiers, as well as the harm to the living environment of existing neighbouring occupiers. Furthermore, the impact on parking/highways and the ecology of the site are further areas of harm identified.

8.2 In weighing up the planning benefits of the proposals (largely limited to the introduction of two additional units to the housing stock in the borough,) versus the harms arising from the scheme (as detailed at length in the officer assessment above), it is considered that the harm identified is not outweighed by the benefits by a significant margin. Having regard to the material considerations and all matters raised, the Local Planning Authority considers that the balance of considerations therefore weighs firmly against the proposal, and planning permission is recommended to be refused as set out in the recommendation at the head of the report.

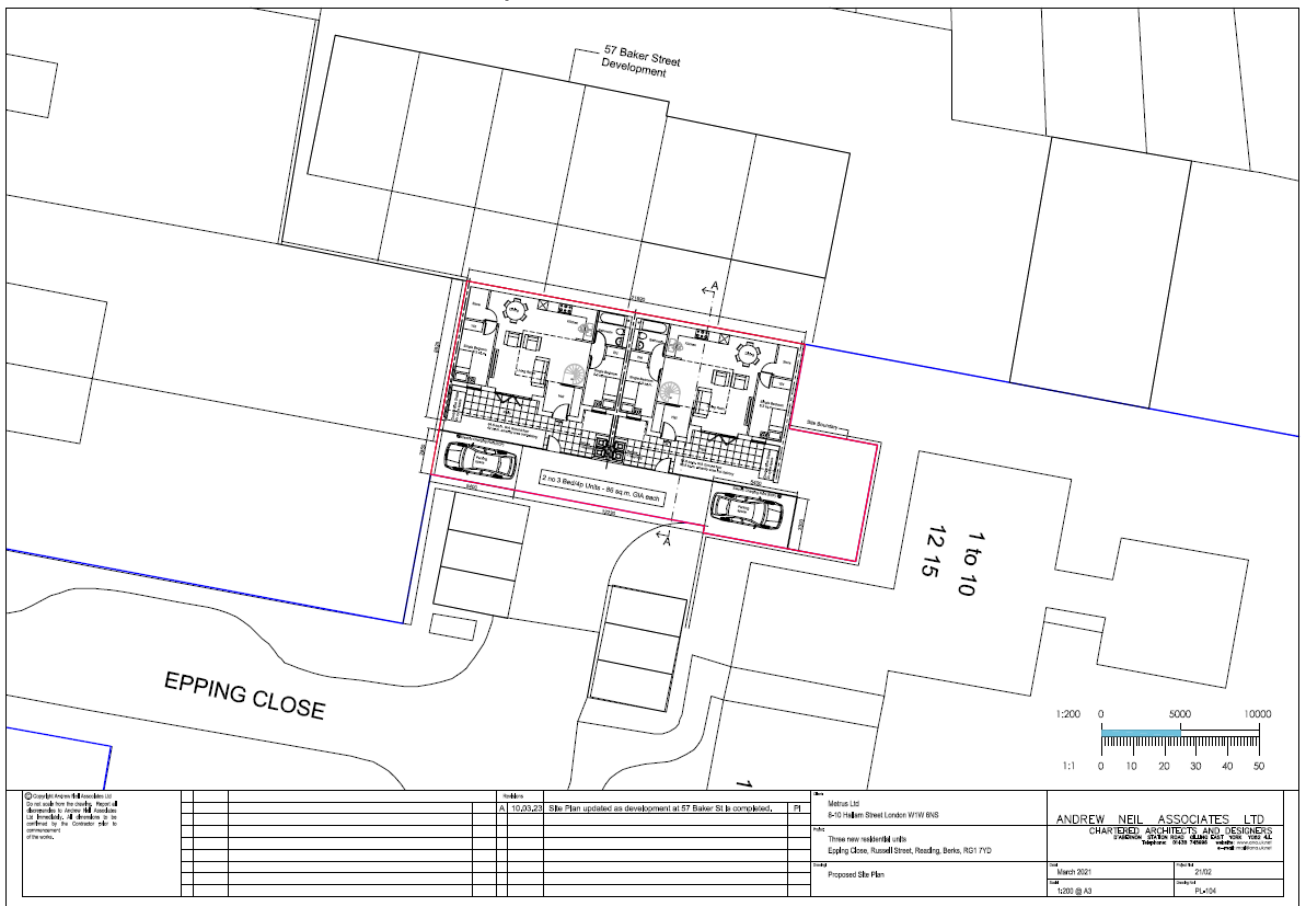
Case Officer: Ethne Humphreys

Plans Considered:

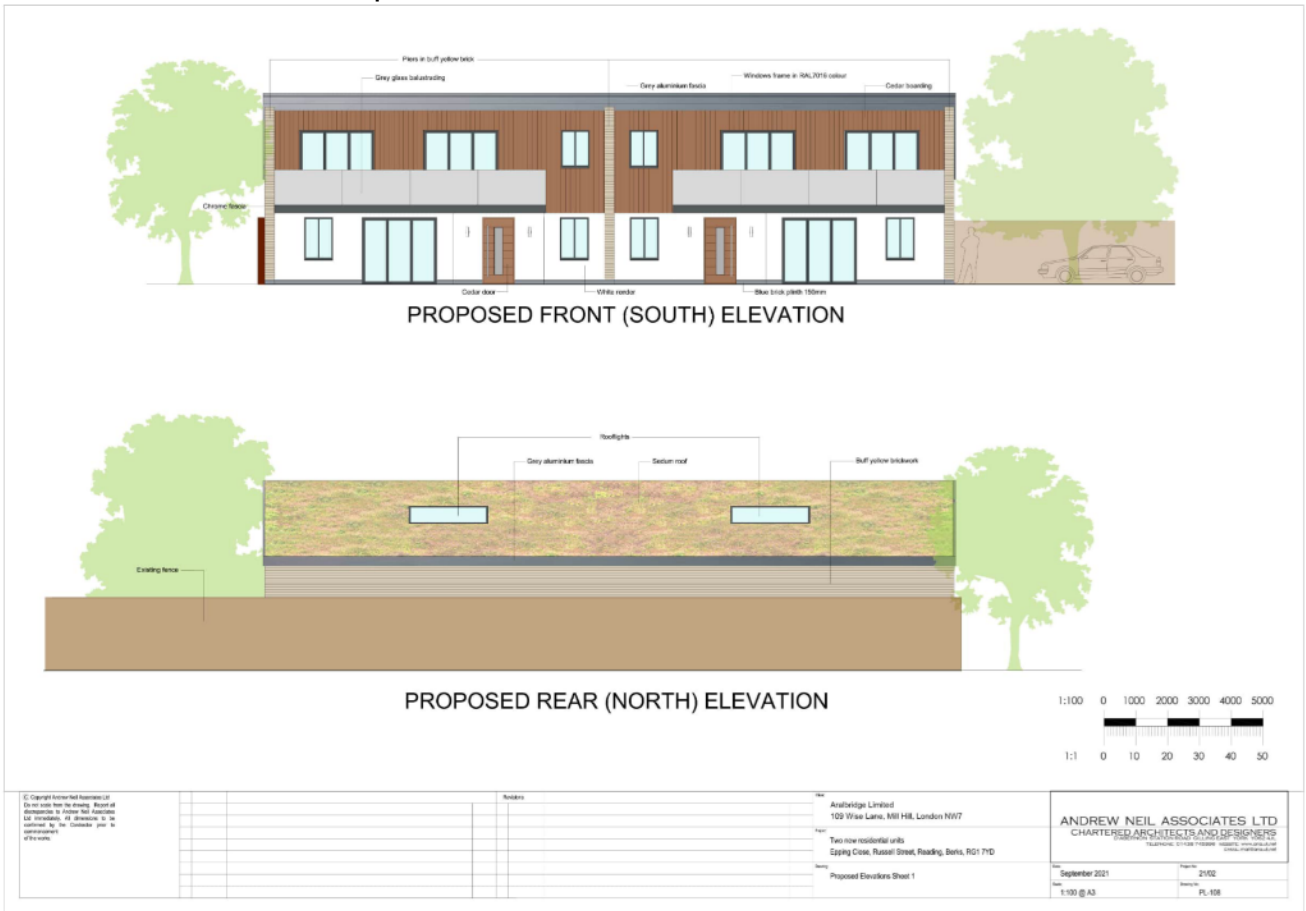
Existing Site Plan



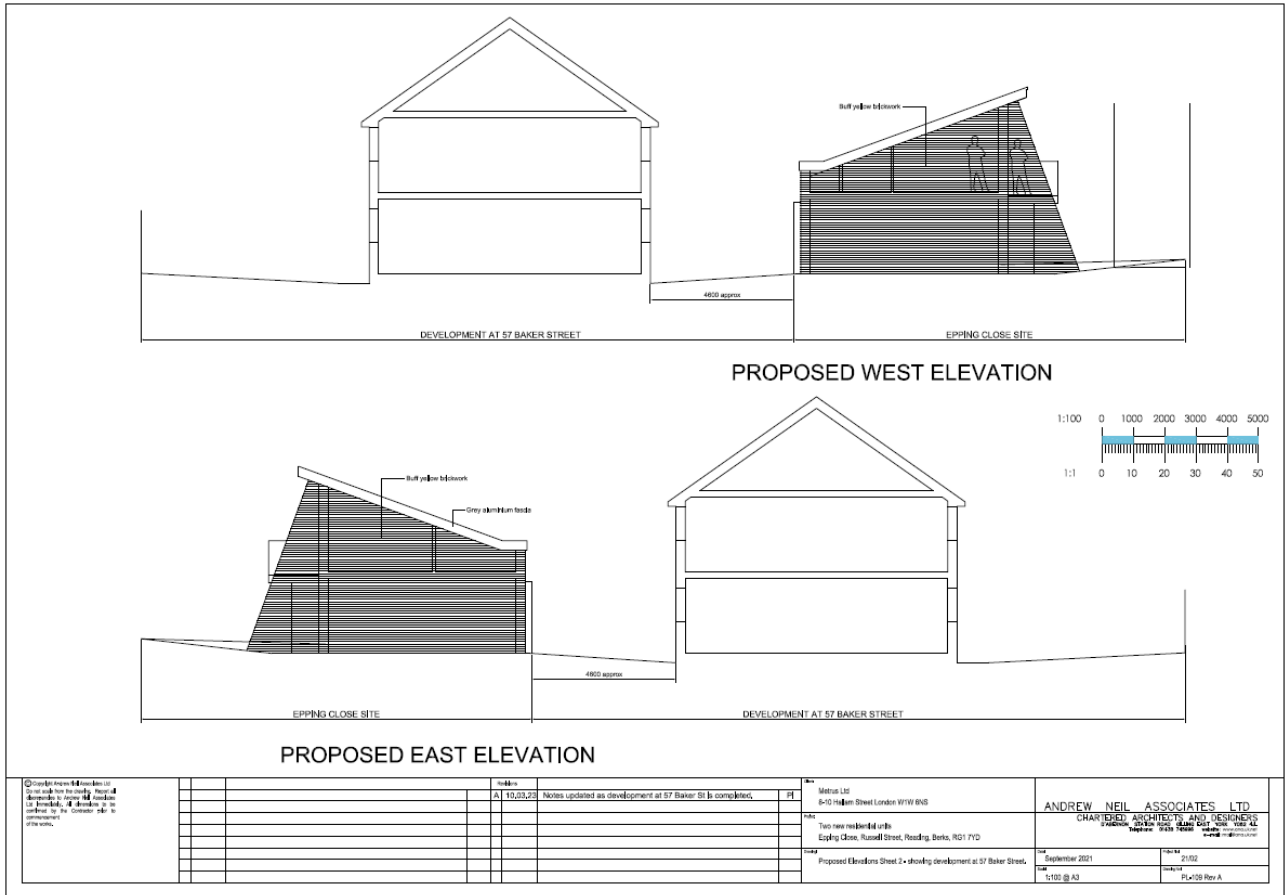
Proposed Site Plan



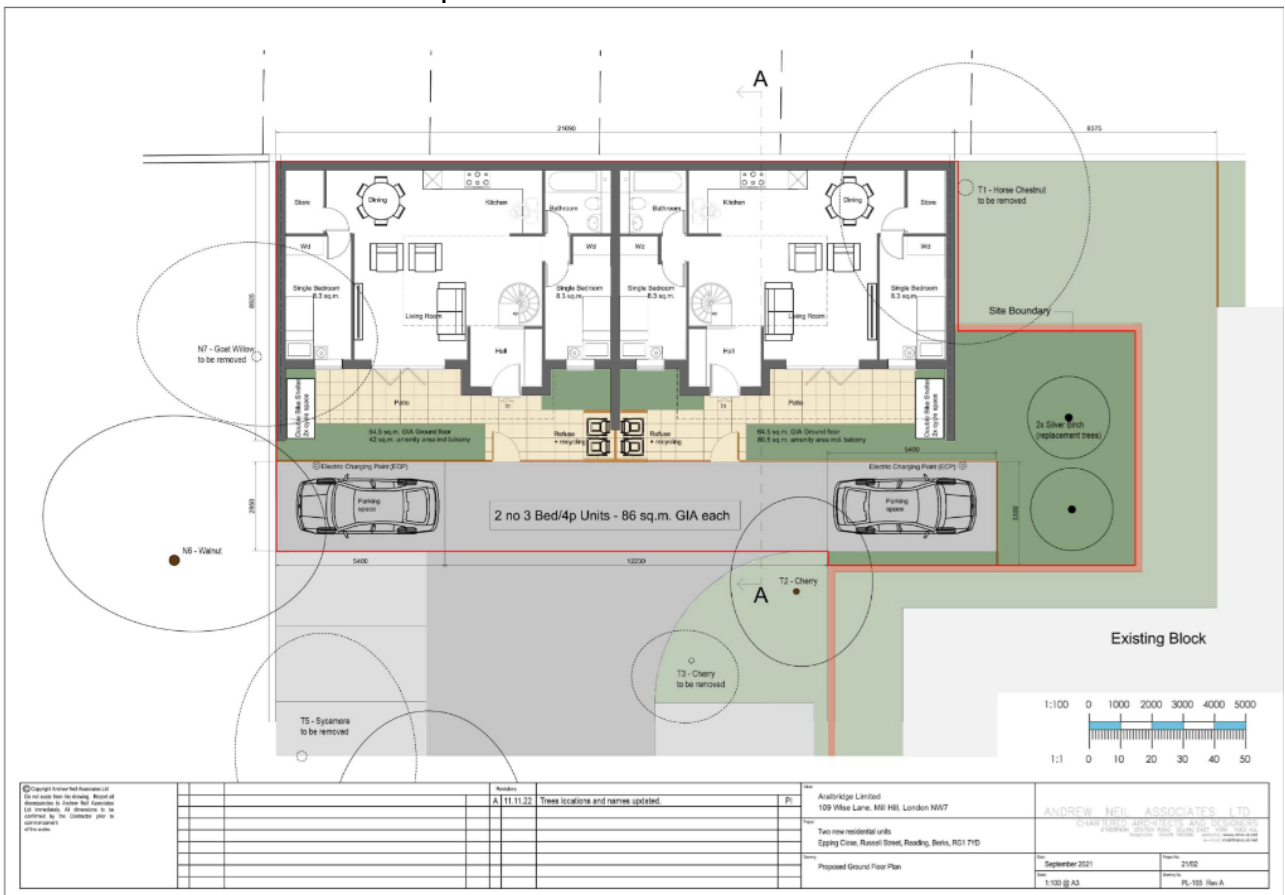
Proposed North and South Elevations



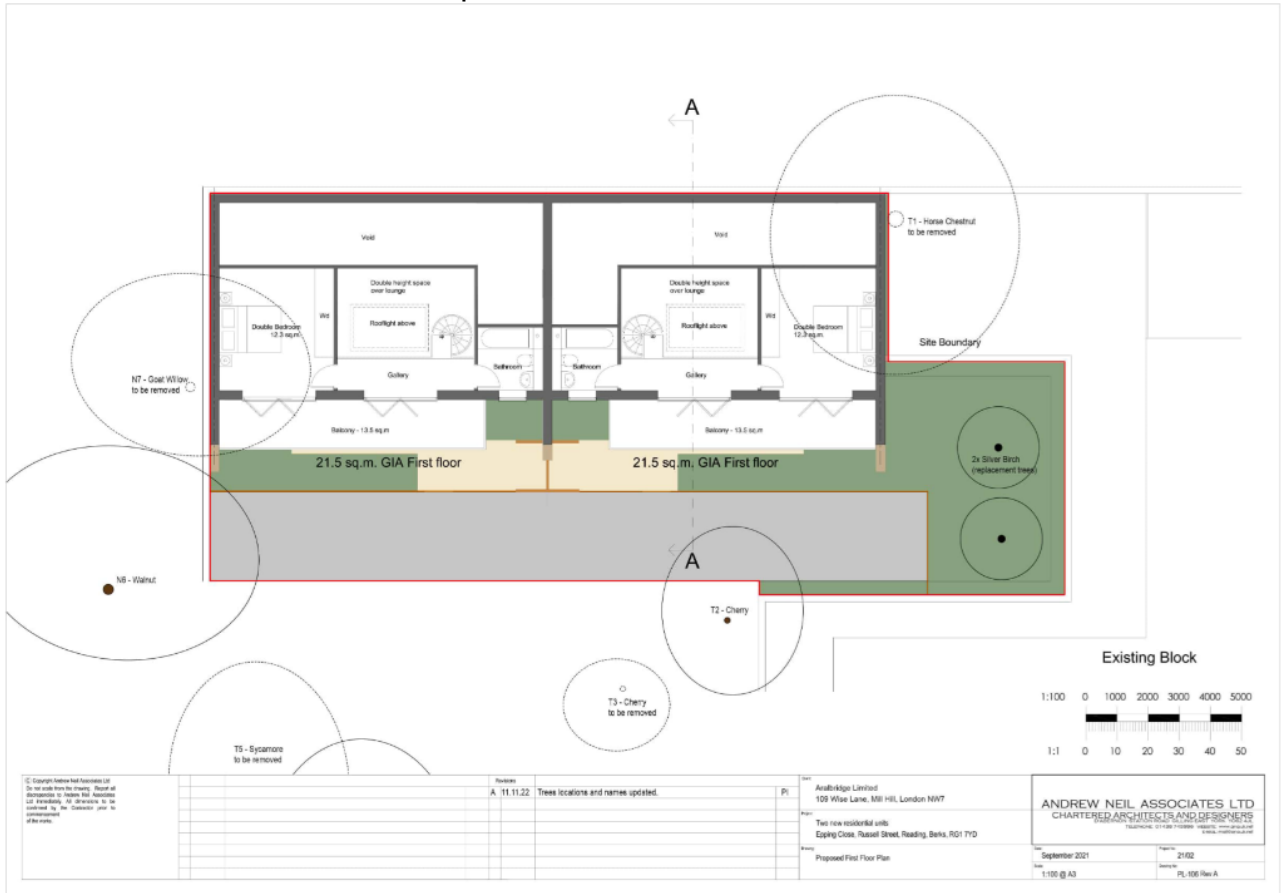
Proposed East and West Elevations



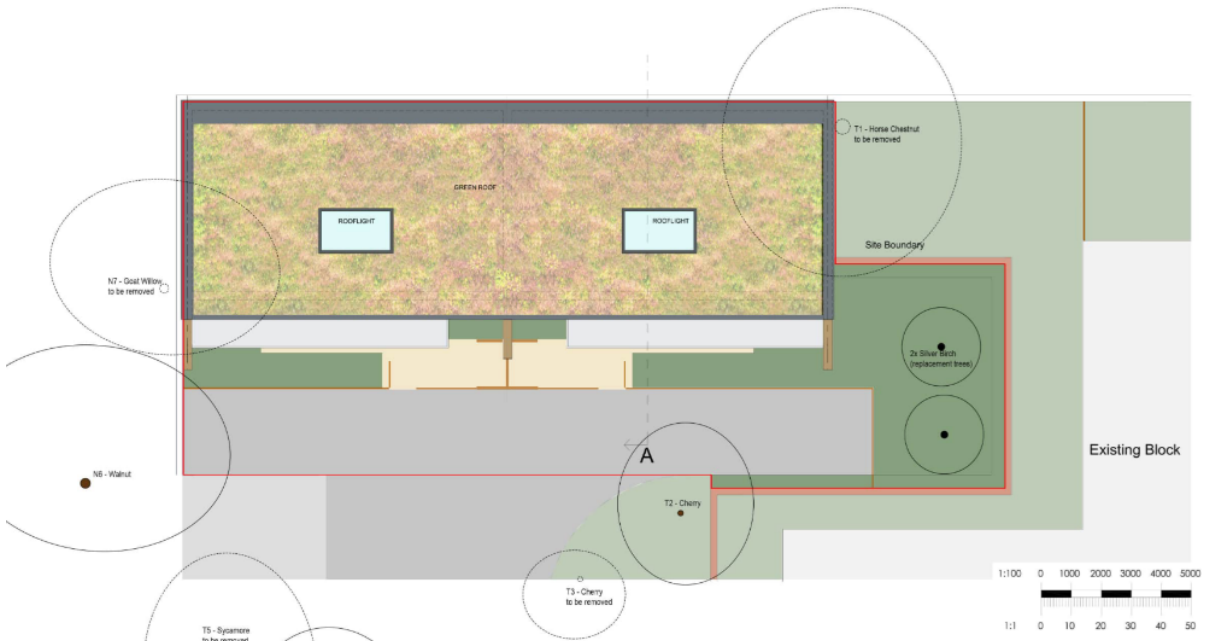
Proposed Ground Floor Plan



Proposed First Floor Plan



Proposed Roof Plan



© Copyright Andrew Neil Associates Ltd Do not reuse from this drawing. Repeat of drawings in whole or in part without the permission of Andrew Neil Associates Ltd is prohibited. All drawings to be submitted to the Council must be accompanied by the original of the plans.	Revisions A. 11.11.22. Tree locations and names updated.	PI Architects Limited 100 Wilton Lane, Mill Hill, London NW7 Two new residential units Epping Chase, Russel Street, Reading, Berks, RG1 7FD Proposed Roof Plan	ANDREW NEIL ASSOCIATES LTD CHARTERED ARCHITECTS AND DESIGNERS 100 WILTON LANE, MILL HILL, LONDON NW7 7JL 0208 861 1111 www.andrewneil.co.uk September 2021 1:100 @ A3	2102 PL107 Rev A
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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29TH March 2023

Ward: Emmer Green

App No: 221312/VAR

Address: Reading Golf Club, 17 Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green

Proposal: Outline planning application with matters reserved in respect of Appearance for demolition of clubhouse and erection of a new residential scheme (c3 use) including affordable housing and public open space at former reading golf club without complying with conditions 5 (Plans), 8&9 (Emissions) 10&11 (SuDS), 12 (Levels), 13 (Mix), 17 (AMS), 19 (Habitat Enhancement), 20 (CEMP), 22 (Biodiversity), 25&26 (Contamination), 29 (CMS), 34 (Cycle Parking), 35 (Refuse), 39 (Car Parking), 41 (Traffic Calming) & 44 (Archaeology) of outline permission 211843 for amendments including changes to layout, mix, parking, drainage, landscaping, open space and energy

Applicant: Vistry Thames Valley

13 Week Target Decision Date: 27/01/2023

RECOMMENDATION:

Delegate to the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services (ADPTPPS) to i) **GRANT** full planning permission, subject to the satisfactory completion of a s106 legal agreement or ii) Refuse full planning permission if the legal agreement is not completed by 28/04/2023 (unless officers on behalf of the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement)

S106 Obligations (As per the original outline planning permission - proposed changes shown ~~crossed through~~ and underlined):

1. Provision of 30% on-site Affordable Housing at a tenure split of 62:38 (Affordable Rent / Shared Ownership) in line with the current Affordable Housing SPD 2020. Provision of an equivalent financial contribution towards provision of off-site affordable housing should the on-site units not be provided.
2. A contribution of £550,000 towards local healthcare provision
3. A contribution of ~~£135,000~~ £334,449 towards carbon off-setting or other contribution agreed with the LPA as part of the detailed SAP energy performance review of the development. Sustainability Statement and Energy Statement to be submitted to include projected SAP calculations and including confirmation of carbon off-setting approach that will be taken and, if necessary, a calculation of S106 payment amount required should the development fail to achieve 100% off-set on-site to be submitted
4. A contribution of £557,500 towards open space and leisure facilities in Emmer Green (including £250,000 towards provision of a 3G sports pitch)
5. Provision of a Construction Phase Employment, Skills and Training Plan and monitoring of this or equivalent financial contribution towards local skills and labour training.

6. Provision of a car club and spaces for a minimum period of 5 years and a contribution of £10,000 to assist funding of a local Car Club provider

7. A contribution of £25,000 towards public art

8. A contribution of £50,000 a year (for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 5 years) to support bus services serving the site within the Caversham area.

9. A contribution of £100, 000 to facilitate the appropriate changes at the junction of Peppard Road / Prospect Street / Henley Road / Westfield Road signalised control junction to increase capacity at the junction.

10. To enter into a highway agreement for junction improvements to the Peppard Road / Kiln Road / Caversham Park Road to mitigate the predicted increases, in accordance with the proposed mitigation scheme illustrated on Drawing 45675/5511/005 and Figure 7.1 of the TA.

11. To enter into a highway agreement to secure off-site highway works for pedestrians' improvements within the vicinity of the site as shown on concept drawing 45675/5511/004 and relocation of bus stop on Kidmore End Road as shown on concept drawing 45675/5510/001

12. To provide and manage all areas of on-site open space. Submission, approval and adherence to a maintenance and management strategy.

13. Submission, approval and adherence to a Travel Plan (including timetable for ongoing review and re-surveys)

14. A contribution towards off-site biodiversity enhancements within the local area to provide for a minimal overall 10% net gain in biodiversity

All contributions index linked from date of planning permission.

Conditions (As per the original outline planning permission - proposed changes show ~~crossed through~~ and underlined):

1. Outline Time Limit - Reserved Matters to be submitted within 3 years of the date of the original outline planning permission ref 211843 (31/03/2022)

2. Outline Time Limit - Development to commence within 3 years of the date of the original outline planning permission ref 211843 (31/03/2022) or 2 years from date of approval of reserved matters

3. Outline Reserved Matters - Prior to commencement of development reserved matters in respect of external appearance to be submitted and approved

4. Outline Principles - Reserved Matters in respect of appearance to accord with principles shown in approved plans and documents

5. Approved Plans - Development not to be carried out other than in accordance with the approved plans

6. Phasing - Prior to commencement of development submission and approval of development phasing plans and details

7. Materials - Prior to commencement of development of any dwellings details of all external materials to be used on dwellings to be submitted and approved
8. SAP Assessment Design Stage - ~~Prior to commencement of development a design stage SAP Assessment to be submitted and approved~~ Development not to be carried out other than in accordance with the submitted Energy Statement
9. SAP Assessment As Built - Prior to first occupation of the penultimate dwelling within each phase an as built SAP Assessment to be submitted and approved demonstrating compliance with that approved at design stage under condition no. 8 above
10. SuDS - Prior to commencement of development (excluding demolition) details of SuDS strategy, ~~design,~~ management, maintenance and timetable for implementation to be submitted and approved
11. SuDS - Implementation of SuDS in accordance with timetable and details approved under condition no. 10
12. Finished Floor Levels - ~~Prior to commencement of development details of finished floor level compared to existing ground levels to be submitted and approved~~ Development not to be carried out other than in accordance with the submitted floor level details and plans
13. Dwelling Mix - No change to proposed dwelling without written prior approval from the LPA
14. Hard and Soft Landscaping Scheme - Prior to commencement of development full details of hard and soft landscaping to be submitted and approved
15. Boundary Treatments - Prior to commencement of development of any dwellings full details of boundary treatments to be submitted and approved
16. Landscape Management - Prior to commencement of development full details of management and maintenance of all landscaped areas
17. Arboricultural Method Statement - ~~Prior to commencement of development a detailed arboricultural method statement and tree protection plan to be submitted and approved~~ Development not to be carried out other than in accordance with the submitted Arboricultural Method Statement
18. Removal of Permitted Development Rights - Class A & E for all new dwellings
19. Habitat Enhancement Scheme - Prior to commencement of development a habitat enhancement scheme and timetable for implementation to be submitted and approved
20. Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) - ~~Prior to commencement of development a CEMP to be submitted and approved~~ Development not to be carried out other than in accordance with the approved CEMP
21. External Lighting - Prior to commencement of development of any dwellings an external lighting scheme to be submitted and approved
22. Biodiversity Impact Calculation (BIC) - Prior to commencement of development a biodiversity enhancement scheme demonstrating compliance with the approved BIC to be submitted and approved

23. Mechanical Plant - No mechanical plant to be installed until a noise assessment as been submitted and approved
24. Dwelling noise mitigation - Prior to occupation of any dwelling noise, glazing, ventilation and any other mitigation measures to be provided in full in accordance with the approved details
25. Contaminated Land Assessment - ~~Prior to commencement of development a contaminated land assessment to be submitted and approved~~ Development not to be carried out other than in accordance with the approved contamination assessment
26. Contaminated Land Remediation - ~~Prior to commencement of development a contaminated land remediation scheme to be submitted and approved~~ Development not to be carried out other than in accordance with the approved contamination remediation scheme
27. Contaminated Land Remediation Implementation - To be implanted in accordance with approved timetable of works under condition no.26
28. Unidentified Contamination - Development to cease and investigations to take place if identified.
29. Construction Method statement (CMS) - Prior to commencement of development a CMS to be submitted and approved
30. Hours of Construction - To be as per the Council's standard hours only: 0800hrs to 1800hrs Mondays to Fridays, and 0800hrs to 1300hrs on Saturdays, and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays
31. No Burning of Waste on Site
32. Use of Roof Restricted - Flat roof areas of any new dwellings not be used as balcony, terrace or roof garden areas
33. Vehicular Access - No dwelling to be occupied until the access serving it has been provided in accordance with the approved details
34. Cycle Parking - ~~Prior to commencement of development of any dwellings details of cycle parking for all dwellings to be submitted and approved~~ Prior to occupation of any dwelling cycle parking spaces to be provided in accordance with the approved plans
35. Refuse Collection - ~~Prior to commencement of development of any dwellings details of refuse collection arrangements for all dwellings to be submitted and approved~~ Prior to occupation of any dwelling refuse storage facilities to be provided in accordance with the approved plans
36. Existing Access Closure - Existing accesses to be stopped up and abandoned when new accesses are brought into use
37. Maintenance of Visibility Splays - Area to be kept clear above a sightline height of 0.6m at all times
38. Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging - No dwelling to be occupied until details of EV charging scheme have been submitted and approved and active charging point provided in full on site

~~39. Vehicle Parking - Prior to commencement of development of any dwellings details of all vehicle parking spaces to be submitted and approved~~ Prior to occupation of any dwelling vehicle parking spaces to be provided in accordance with the approved plans

40. Garages - All proposed garages to be kept available for parking of vehicles at all times

~~41. On-site Traffic Calming - Prior to commencement of development of any dwellings details of all on-site traffic calming to be submitted and approved~~ No dwelling within an approved phase of the development to be occupied until traffic calming measures for that phase have been provided in accordance with the approved plans

42. Roads to be Provided - No dwelling to be occupied until the roads/driveway serving it have been provided in accordance with the approved plans

43. Security Strategy - Prior to commencement of development of any dwellings details of a security strategy to be submitted and approved.

~~44. Archaeology - Prior to commencement of development implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation to be submitted and approved~~ Development not to be carried out other than in accordance with the approved archaeological written scheme of investigation

45. Play Facilities - Prior to commencement of development of any dwellings details of all on site play facilities and equipment to be submitted and approved

46. Photovoltaic Panels - Prior to commencement of development of any dwellings details of photovoltaic panels to be submitted and approved.

47. Thames Water - Foul Water - Prior to commencement details confirming either foul water network upgrades have been undertaken or that a development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with Thames Water to be submitted and approved.

48. Thames Water - Water Network - Prior to first occupation details confirming all water network upgrades to accommodate the development have been carried out or that a development and infrastructure phasing plan has been agreed with Thames Water to be submitted and approved.

49. Thames Water - Groundwater Abstraction Source Protection Strategy - Prior to commencement of development details of a Groundwater Abstraction Source Protection Strategy detailing how the water abstraction source would not be detrimentally affected by the proposed development both during and after its construction has been agreed with Thames Water to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

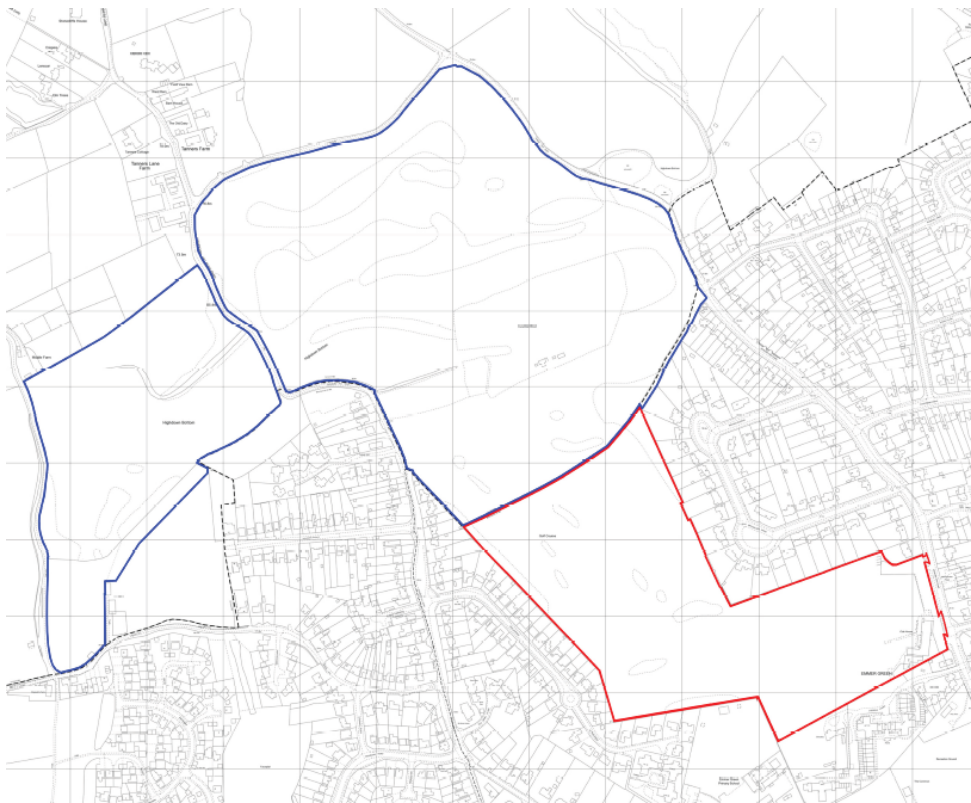
Informatives

1. Positive and Proactive Working - approval
2. Pre-commencement conditions information confirming agreement by applicant
3. Highways Act information
4. S106/S278 agreements relate to this application
5. Terms and conditions information
6. Building Control
7. Construction working information
8. No encroachment
9. Contaminated land information
10. CIL liable development
11. Protection of road verges information

12. Ongoing compliance conditions information
13. Access constriction information
14. Thames Water Information
15. Only works to trees included within the approved arboricultural method statement are approved by virtue of this permission

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site, delineated by the red line boundary, is 12.5ha in size and forms part of the former Reading Golf Club playing course. The site is currently vacant but consists of former holes 1 and 18 and part of holes 2, 3, 4 and 17 of the former course and facilities including clubhouse; storage; access and car parking. The land ownership of Reading Golf Club in its entirety consists of 42ha of land that spans the administrative boundary between Reading Borough and South Oxfordshire District. The 'redline' boundary of the application site is contained wholly within the Borough of Reading as illustrated on the Site Location Plan below:



Location Plan - Red Line Area - Application Site and Land within Reading Borough. Blue Line Area - Land under the Applicants Control within South Oxfordshire District

- 1.2 The application site is irregular in shape with the site frontage on Kidmore End Road where the site access, clubhouse and car parking area located.
- 1.3 The lower southern part of the application site is bounded to the south by the rear boundary line of the playing fields at Emmer Green Primary School; and the road access to Lyfield Court and The Conifers a retirement complex of 2-

storey accommodation; and the boundary of a large residential dwelling at The Brindles.

- 1.4 The upper northern part of the application site to the east and west is bounded respectively by the rear gardens of the two storey detached dwellings on Brooklyn Drive; and various styles of dwellings on Gorselands, Eric Avenue and Highdown Hill Road. Many of these dwelling plots contain gated access directly onto the Golf Course. The surrounding area within Reading Borough has a sylvan, low to medium density, suburban character. The northern alignment of the site has no physical boundary at present as it adjoins the remainder of the playing course located within South Oxfordshire District.
- 1.5 Reading Golf Club is no longer operating at the site having relocated to The Caversham course, however the application site is still laid out as a golf course, with records of a golf course existing in this location for over 100 years. A shorter form family golf facility called 'The Fairways' has been set up on land to the north of the application site on part of the former course land located within South Oxfordshire District. This facility offers fun-orientated short game golf, foot golf and disc golf activities.
- 1.6 The application site currently consists of extensive areas of open managed grassland with existing mature trees and hedgerows. Due to the extent of existing trees, of varying categories, the site is subject to an Area Tree Preservation Order (ref Area TPO 4/18) and TPO 96/02 which includes 23 individual trees and 9 groups of trees.
- 1.7 Areas within the site are subject to Reading Borough planning designations as set out on the adopted proposals map as a 'Site for development in Caversham and Emmer Green'; an area of identified biodiversity interest, and existing or proposed Green Link. The site is also located within an Area of Archaeological potential. To the north of the application site within the Applicant's ownership but within South Oxfordshire District is an Area of Ancient Woodland known as 'Cucumber Wood' whilst the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) also lies approximately 1km to the north of the site.
- 1.8 Kidmore End Road is a single carriageway local distributor road operating a speed limit of 30mph. A footway is provided on the western side of Kidmore End Road and is segregated from the main carriageway by means of a 2.5m-wide grass verge.
- 1.9 Emmer Green Local Centre is located within 350m from the site boundary and provides amenities such as a Post Office; Convenience Store; Express Supermarket; Pharmacy and Take-aways, Cafes. Emmer Green Primary School is the closest primary school to the site, located approximately 850m away by foot. The nearest secondary school and sixth form is Highdown School and Sixth Form, this is located 1.1km west of the site, by foot.
- 1.10 Bus stops are located on Kidmore End Road in close proximity to the site access and egress, providing services into Reading Town centre and Reading Station (Premier Routes 23 and 24). The station is 3.3km from the site and can be reached in approximately 15-minutes by bicycle. Reading Borough Council (RBC) branded cycle routes R40 and R41 provide a connection to Reading Station and Town Centre.
- 1.2 Outline Planning Permission ref. 211843OUT was granted at the site on 31st March 2022 for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new

residential scheme (c3 use) to include affordable housing and public open space at the former reading golf club with the ‘appearance’ of the development being the only reserved matter. In summary the development granted outline planning permission included:

- 223 residential dwellings including 67 (30%) affordable houses.
- 442 vehicle parking spaces
- A development layout set around a central spine road providing access from Kidmore End Road and a series of circular cul de sacs leading off from this central access road.
- 3.89ha of public open space and 0.74ha of public green space (total 4.63ha)
- A 0.16ha Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP)
- Removal of 112 trees and planting of 196 new trees (net gain of 84 trees)
- Biodiversity enhancements (10% biodiversity net gain to be provided, on and off-site)



Approved Development Site Layout

2. PROPOSAL

2.1 The submitted application seeks to vary conditions, including amending the approved plans, attached to the original outline planning permission ref. 211843OUT (under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act) also known as an application for *minor material amendments* to a planning permission.

2.2 Fairfax Properties along with Reading Golf Club were the joint applicant for the outline permission. Since consent was granted, Vistry Thames Valley has acquired the site and propose a number of amendments in order for them to deliver the development.



Proposed Amended Development Site Layout

2.3 The proposed variations to the approved outline planning permission include:

- Amended unit mix as shown in table below (total number of proposed dwellings remains 223):

	Consented Mix	Proposed Mix
Affordable Housing	10 x 1-bed flat/maisonette	10 x 1-bed flat/maisonette
	6 x 2-bed flat	6 x 2-bed flat
	18 x 2-bed house	14 x 2-bed house
	13 x 3-bed house	17 x 3-bed house
	20 x 4-bed house	20 x 4-bed house
Market Housing		
	47 x 2-bed house	41 x 2-bed house
	50 x 3-bed house	57 x 3-bed house
	51 x 4-bed house	48 x 4-bed house
	8 x 5-bed house	10 x 5-bed house

- Approved unit mix provided 63.7% of dwellings as 3 bed or larger, proposed amended mix would provide increased 68.2% of dwellings as 3 bed or larger. 30% of dwellings to be provided as affordable housing as per the approved development.
- Minor layout and siting changes to every dwelling including changes to house types and widening of car spaces to ensure compliance with building regulation requirements for wheelchair user adaptability and needs of housebuilder.

- Increase in number visitor and car club parking spaces from 4 to 13
- The grass verge to northern edge of spine road between access and first northern junction has been removed to allow footway/cycleway to be moved out of Root Protection Areas and the grass verge to remainder of spine road made wider to improve soft landscaping along spine road.



Approved layout with verge to all of spine road



Proposed layout without verge to first section of spine road and wider verge to rest of spine road

- Garages removed from plots (using new plot numbering) 24, 26, 27, 29, 30, 33, 34, 43, 44, 46, 47, 48, 49, 50, 55, 56, 72, 73, 82, 83, 99, 100, 113, 126, 127, 128, 130, 131, 139, 144, 145, 194, 195, 197, 198, 207, 209 and replaced with 2nd on plot parking space to encourage use and discourage on street parking. These plots will be provided with sheds for bike parking.
- On plots where garages are to be retained, garages pushed back in the plot to allow for 2 driveway parking spaces in addition to garage space.
- Drainage attenuation basins and swales have been re-designed, and locations adjusted within the site to accommodate site flows and to re-

locate them from higher areas of the site A proposed attenuation basin in the south west corner of the site has been removed. The proposed swale within the main area of open space in the north east of the site (opposite plots 146-160 and adjacent to the rear gardens of existing properties to Brooklyn Drive) is proposed to be relocated closer to the road, to avoid retained trees / excavation within root protection area (RPA).

- A series of culverted crossing points are proposed to be provided over swale which spans the length of the area of public open space to maintain accessibility to this area from the to the northwest part of the development.
- Position of central attenuation basin and Locally Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) changed within the centre of the site. Second LEAP added in south west corner of the site in replace of attenuation basin that is to be removed.



Approved location of central attenuation basin and LEAP



Proposed location of central attenuation basin and LEAP

- Changes to the overall amount, layout and composition of open space to be provided within the development. Shown in table below with proposed change in provision compared to that approved shown in brackets:

<u>Public Open Space</u>	Equipped/Designated Play Area	0.16ha
	Parks and Gardens	1.03ha (+0.02ha)
	Amenity Green Space	1.01ha (-0.32ha)
	Natural and Semi-Natural	1.77ha (+0.6ha)
TOTAL PUBLIC OPEN SPACE		3.97ha (+0.08ha)
<u>Public Green Space</u>	SuDS	0.24ha (-0.26ha)
	Street Planting	0.34ha (+0.1ha)
TOTAL PUBLIC GREEN SPACE		0.58ha (-0.16ha)
TOTAL UNDESIGNATED OPEN SPACE:		4.55ha (-0.08ha)
<u>Private Green Space</u>	Front Garden	0.43ha (+0.06ha)
	Rear Garden	2.46ha (-0.34ha)
TOTAL PRIVATE GREEN SPACE		2.89ha (-0.28ha)
TOTAL PUBLIC & PRIVATE GREEN SPACE		7.44ha (-0.36ha)

- The proposed re-design of the layout of attenuation basins and swales across the site allows for retention of 6 trees previously proposed for removal (trees with references G165, T166, T167, T168, T169 and T170 from tree survey considered when outline planning permission was granted). The outline permission secured planting of 196 new native trees resulting in an overall net gain of 84 trees. The variation application proposes that an additional 13 trees would be planted making a total of 209 new native trees across the site which is an overall net gain of 104 trees.
- Turning head inserted to parking court to front of plots 215-223 for access

- Changes to the energy strategy for the development including reduction in the number of dwellings to be served by ASHP's from all dwellings to 81.

2.4 Other plot specific changes to the approved development include:

- Plot 3 parking handed to increase separation between plot 2 and 3.
- Plot 6 parking moved alongside dwelling
- Plot 24 parking moved adjacent to dwelling Substation inserted opposite plot 26 to allow for additional load due to requirements for electric vehicle charging points and ASHP's.
- Plots 35-37 frontage parking moved to sides of plots to allow for increased soft landscaping to spine road.
- Parking to plots 39-40 handed to allow for traffic calming measures to be inserted.
- Plot 46/47 now semi-detached.
- Plot 48 now detached.
- Road junction near plot 58 amended to remove majority of road and footpath from RPA on opposite side of road.
- Plot 59 made narrower to accommodate new road layout.
- Plot 60 changed to bungalow.
- Plot 63-64 amended from 1 bed maisonettes to 1 bed houses to allow for M(4)2 compliance and remove need for windows facing boundary
- Plot 71 now detached.
- Plot 73 frontage parking moved to side to increase soft landscaping.
- Plots 84-85 re-orientated to address new road layout and avoid close rear to side relationship.
- Plots 89 & 90 detached with parking alongside dwelling.
- Plots 93-94 parking moved adjacent to dwellings with garages provided.
- Plot 97 now two storey to match other house in semi-pair.
- Plot 98 wider plot added.
- Plot 99 amended so frontage faces open space instead of boundary. Parking moved alongside dwelling to remove approved parking and garage layout from fouling open space.
- Plot 100-101 now semi with frontage parking.
- Plot 102 now detached.
- Plot 107 parking handed to make more convenient.
- Plot 108 parking handed.
- Plots 116 & 117 re-arranged to face open space. Plot 118 moved to avoid clash with RPA's and avoid overshadowing into garden.
- Plots 132 to 139 order revised.
- Plots 135-136 moved forward with driveway parking to reduce pressure on RPA within rear garden and limit overshadowing to gardens.
- Plots 144-145 rotated to provide dual aspect and passive surveillance onto open spaces
- Parking rearranged for plots 159-160.
- Plots 176-179 stepped back from street to facilitate parking requirements of M4(2).
- Plot 180 changed to smaller plot to allow for re-configured parking to still fit between RPAs of retained trees.
- Plots 181-191 rearranged to allow for larger area of public open space around tree between plots 181/182. 1 bed maisonettes in run amended to 1 bed houses to allow for M(4)2 compliance.
- Plots 192, 193, 212 and 213 amended to allow for M(4)2 compliance.
- Plot 198 parking moved to improve relationship with dwelling
- Plots 215-216 parking removed from rear gardens

2.5 The application also seeks to vary a number of conditions attached to the extant outline planning permission by way of either amended wording of the conditions or by seeking approval of details reserved by the conditions. This includes for the following conditions:

- Condition no. 5, (approved plans)
- Condition no. 8 (dwelling emission rate - design stage)
- Condition no. 10 (SuDS Strategy)
- Condition no. 11 (implementation of SuDS Strategy)
- Condition no. 13 (housing mix)
- Condition no. 12 (Site Levels)
- Condition no. 17 (arboricultural method statement)
- Condition no. 19 (Habitat Enhancement Scheme)
- Condition no. 20 (Construction Environmental Management Plan)
- Condition no. 22 (Biodiversity Net Gain),
- Condition no. 25 (Contamination Assessment),
- Condition no. 26 (Contamination Remediation)
- Condition no. 29 (Construction Method Statement)
- Condition no. 34 (Cycle Parking Spaces)
- Condition no. 35 (Refuse and Recycling)
- Condition no. 39 (Car Parking Spaces)
- Condition no. 41 (Traffic Calming Features)
- Condition no. 44 (Archaeological Works)

Environmental Impact Assessment Matters

2.6 The planning outline application which was approved (ref. 211843) was accompanied by an Environment Statement (ES), as the development was considered to be an EIA Development (Environmental Impact Assessment Development) The EIA process is used to assess the likely significant effects of a proposed development upon all aspects of the environment. The EIA is also relevant to the current application which seeks to vary the existing outline planning permission. The current application is accompanied by an addendum statement to the original ES, setting out the impacts of the proposed changes to the development. The ES is required to provide the LPA with sufficient information about the potential effects of the development prior to a decision being made on the variation planning application. The information provided as part of the ES addendum and original ES to which it relates have been considered in the determination of the application and were consulted on in accordance with the EIA Regulations 2017.

2.7 Submitted Drawings and Documents

- Presentation Site Layout (dwg no. 6960-PL054 REV J);
- Site Layout (B+W) (dwg. no. 6960-PL053 REV Q);
- Details Site Layout - Sheet 1 (dwg no. 6960-PL059 REV O);
- Site Block Plan (dwg no. 6960-PL-051D)
- Details Site Layout - Sheet 2 (dwg no. 6960-PL060 REV M);
- Details Site Layout - Sheet 3 (dwg no. 6960-PL061 REV M);
- Parking Plan (dwg no. 6960-PL057 REV I);
- Site Layout Affordable Dwelling Locations (dwg no. 6960-PL064 REV B);
- Schedule of Accommodation ref. 6960-D.06
- Green Space Provision on Site (dwg no. 6960-PL063 REV h);
- Garages - Proposed Plans and Elevations (dwg no. 6960-PL154 REV C);

- Sub Station & Cycle Stores (dwg no. 6960-PL157);
- Landscape Masterplan (dwg no. VYH23781 10)
- Proposed Site Sections (dwg no. VYH23781 16)
- Tree Planting Plan (dwg no. VYH23781 17 Rev C)
- Arboricultural Method Statement ref. D2218AMS v4
- Foundation Zoning Plan 47313-ECE-XX-XX-DR-S-001 P04
- Construction Environmental Management Plan ref. P3063
- Technical Species note to support CEMP
- AES Energy Statement Rev 3
- AES Full SAP Calculations
- Biodiversity Impact Calculation report and spreadsheet
- Levels & Drainage Sheet 1 of 5 (dwg no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-001-P9);
- Levels & Drainage Sheet 2 of 5 (dwg no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-002-P10);
- Levels & Drainage Sheet 3 of 5 (dwg no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-003-P9);
- Levels & Drainage Sheet 4 of 5 (dwg no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-004-P10);
- Levels & Drainage Sheet 5 of 5 (dwg no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-005-P9);
- External Works Sheet 1 of 4 (dwg. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-400-P3)
- External Works Sheet 2 of 4 (dwg. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-401-P4)
- External Works Sheet 1 of 4 (dwg. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-402-P4)
- External Works Sheet 1 of 4 (dwg. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-403-P3)
- Pond A Sections (dwg no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-025-P1)
- Pond B Sections (dwg no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-026-P1)
- Drainage GA Sheet 1 (dwg no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-020-P2);
- Drainage GA Sheet 2 (dwg no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-021-P2);
- Long Section Sheet 1 of 3 (dwg. no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-101-P1);
- Long Section Sheet 2 of 3 (dwg. no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-102-P2);
- Long Section Sheet 3 of 3 (dwg. no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-103-P1);
- Central Basin Details (dwg. no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-151-P1);
- Northern Swale Details (dwg. no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-152-P1);
- Adoptable Sewer Construction Details (dwg. no. 6452-MJA-SW-XX-DR-C-201-P1)
- Proposed Swale Crossings (dwg. no 6452-MJ-SW-XX-DR-C-204 Rev P1)
- SUDS Technical Note;
- EIA Addendum Note (P22-1156)

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 161871: Re-pollard 2 lime trees (T1 and T2). Granted on 11th October 2016.
- 3.2 181992: Cut back one oak overhanging 3 Gorselands from the Golf Course to give 6.5m clearance from property. Granted on 9th January 2019.
- 3.3 200229: Request for an EIA Scoping Opinion in accordance with Regulation 15 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) with regard to the proposed development at Reading Golf Course to develop a scheme for a mixed-use residential led development to incorporate up to 275 new homes; medical space; associated open space and landscaping; vehicle parking, pedestrian, cycle and vehicular accesses, associated highway works; and associated infrastructure. Advice provided between April and May 2020.
- 3.4 200713: Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of

Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential-led scheme (C3 use to include affordable housing) and the provision of community infrastructure at Reading Golf Club. This scheme was based on a development of 260 dwellings. Withdrawn on 25th November 2020.

- 3.5 211843: Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential scheme (C3 use to include affordable housing) and public open space at the former Reading Golf Club. Granted on 31st March 2022 (linked to a S106).
- 3.6 220738: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 19 (Habitat Enhancement Scheme), 20 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) and 44 (Archaeology) of planning permission ref. 211843. Split Decision on 4th November 2022 (details under condition 44 approved but details under condition 19 and 20 not approved)
- 3.7 220930: Application for approval of reserved matters (appearance) submitted pursuant to outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration
- 3.8 220958: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 25, 26 (Contamination) and 29 (Construction Method Statement) of planning permission ref. 211843. Split Decision on 4th January 2023 (details under conditions 25 and 26 approved but details under condition 29 not approved)
- 3.9 220960: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 21 (External Lighting) 35 (Refuse) and 39 (Vehicle Parking) of planning permission ref. 211843. Withdrawn on 30th August 2022
- 3.10 221713: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 47 (water infrastructure phasing plan) and 48 (water network upgrades) of outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration
- 3.11 221762: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 6 (Phasing) of planning permission ref. 211843. Under Consideration
- 3.12 221764: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 7 (Materials) of outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration
- 3.13 221765: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 21 (external lighting scheme) of outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration
- 3.14 230024: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 29 (Construction Method Statement) of planning permission ref. 211843. Under Consideration
- 3.15 230073: Application for Approval of details reserved by condition 14 (hard and soft landscaping) of planning permission ref. 211843. Under Consideration

4 CONSULTATIONS

Statutory

- 4.1 Environment Agency: No objection to the proposed changes.

- 4.2 Natural England: Does not wish to comment on the proposed changes - advises that the application should be determined in accordance with the relevant National and Local Policies and Guidance.
- 4.3 SuDS (Local Flood Authority): No objection to the proposed changes, subject to retention of condition no. 11 to require details of the management and maintenance strategy for the SuDS to be submitted and agreed by the Local Planning Authority

RBC Environmental Protection

- 4.4 No objection to the proposed changes, subject to the conditions attached to the original permission being re-applied. (To secure implementation of the submitted glazing and ventilation scheme, submission approval and implementation of details of bin store details including pest control measures and a construction method statement and to control hours of construction to standard working hours - 0800 to 1800 hours Monday to Friday and 0800 to 1300 hours Saturdays only).

RBC Transport

- 4.5 No objection to the proposed changes, subject to the conditions and section 106 obligations for off-site highway improvement works attached to the original outline planning permission being re-applied. (Conditions To secure submission, approval and implementation of a construction method statement, a scheme of electric vehicle charging and a condition to notify future occupants that they would not be automatically entitled to a parking permit). The submitted vehicle parking, cycle parking and refuse collection details are acceptable and therefore these conditions can be changes to compliance conditions to require the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved details).

RBC Planning Natural Environment Team (Trees)

- 4.6 No objection to the proposed changes. The submitted arboricultural method statement (AM) adequately demonstrates suitable mitigation measures to ensure that the development can be carried out without adversely impacting upon retained trees. This satisfies the details required under condition no. 17 of the extant outline planning permission and therefore this condition should be changed to a compliance condition to require the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved details.
- 4.7 It is recommended that informatives are added to any new planning permission noting that the site is covered by an area TPO and therefore any works to trees not included with the AMS could not take place without separate consent that would need to be obtained under a Tree Works Application. Informatives to advise that storage of materials within future landscaped areas not set out within the AMS should not be carried out without appropriate ground protection measures and that a record of ongoing adherence to the AMS should be maintained to allow the discharge of condition no. 17 at the end of the development construction process.

RBC Ecological Consultant

- 4.8 Comments to follow in update report.

Berkshire Archaeology

- 4.9 No objection to the proposed changes. Condition no. 44 of the original permission required submission and approval of an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). An acceptable WSI was approved under approval of details reserved by condition application ref. 220739APC. A condition should be attached to any variation permission to require the development to be undertaken in full accordance with the WSI.

Thames Water

- 4.10 No comments received regarding the proposed changes. Conditions 47, 48 and 49 attached to the original permission to require submission and approval of infrastructure phasing plans for the water and foul water networks to serve the development and a Groundwater Abstraction Source Protection Strategy would be re-applied.

Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Adviser (CPDA)

- 4.11 No comments received regarding the proposed changes. Condition no. 43 attached to the original permission to require submission and approval of a site security strategy would be re-applied.

Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)

- 4.12 No comments received regarding the proposed changes.

RBC Waste

- 4.13 No objection to the proposed changes, refuse storage and collection arrangements for the development are acceptable.

RBC Leisure/Parks

- 4.14 No comments received regarding the proposed changes.

RBC Housing

- 4.15 The Officer would prefer if one of the five-bedroom houses formed part of the affordable offer but acknowledges that this goes beyond what was agreed under the original permission.

RBC Licensing

- 4.16 No objections to the proposed changes.

Chilterns Conservation Board

- 4.17 No comments received regarding the proposed changes.

Forestry Commission

- 4.18 The application should be determined in accordance with the relevant National and Local Policies and Guidance

Oxfordshire County Council

- 4.19 No comments received regarding the proposed changes.
Sport England
- 4.20 Does not wish to comment on the proposed changes.
Berkshire, Buckingham and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust (BBOWT)
- 4.21 No comments received regarding the proposed changes.
NHS CCG (Clinical Commissioning Group)
- 4.22 Does not wish to comment on the proposed changes.
Historic England
- 4.23 Does not wish to comment on the proposed changes.
Member of Parliament for Reading East - Matt Rodda MP
- 4.24 I am writing to ask the council to oppose some of the proposed changes to plans to develop the Reading Golf Course site. I opposed this development, but I realise that the site now has planning permission for development. It is important that the impact of any development is reduced, and that the development meets local housing needs and that it protects the environment as far as possible. This letter follows the discussion between Reading Borough Council and the developer, and I would like to add that I appreciate the council's work on this, including its work to ensure that houses developed on the golf course site use environmentally friendly heating. I would like to make the following points:
- *Reducing the impact of the development on neighbours*
Neighbours have been concerned about the visual impact of the development and I share their concerns. I would encourage the council to maintain a significant and clear gap, planted with trees and bushes, between the end of neighbouring gardens and the new houses. I would also encourage the council to press for strict controls on noise, working hours, site traffic and other disturbance once building work starts on the site and for compensation to be offered to residents for any breaches.
 - *Trying to reduce some of the impact on local roads*
In addition, I support other measures, such as the support for public transport and funding of improvements to road safety to help reduce the impact of additional traffic from the development. For example, I hope that developer contributions can be used to improve the crossing at the junction of Peppard Road and Henley Road by the Last Crumb pub. I would be interested in other improvements to public transport, crossings or road safety measures funded by the development.
 - *Housing need*
There is a need for more affordable housing in Reading, both to buy and to rent, and many first-time buyers are struggling to get on the housing ladder. I hope this will be taken into account as the council discusses changes to the application and I understand that fewer five-bedroom

homes are now due to be built on the site, with more three and four bedroom homes.

I would encourage the council to press the developer to offer a mixtures of homes so that the site provides an opportunity for local residents and families to buy or rent homes in Reading.

- *Green energy*

I support the council's work to encourage the use of green energy at new homes at the site. I would encourage the council to press for homes to be built to the highest standards and to have solar panels and heat pumps. New developments should be built to comply with the UK's commitments to reduce carbon dioxide and greenhouse gas emissions and it is important that developers support this work.

- *Supporting biodiversity*

The golf course site contains a wide range of native mature trees and woodland, which are important habitats for wildlife. I understand that the woodlands are due to be protected and I would like the developer to also ensure that trees which stand in what was part of the golf course are also protected. I would like to see the developer go further and introduce some rewilding at the site. Given the size of the development and the nature of the site there should be opportunities to turn land which would not be part of gardens into meadows or new woodland.

Public Consultation

4.25 Site notices were erected at five locations surrounding the site on 27th October 2022. Adjoining occupiers were formally consulted by letter - this consultation period ceased on 6th December 2022.

4.26 Five objections have been received which are summarised below:

4.27 Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA)

- Concern that the variations sought include removing 19 of the 49 conditions imposed at outline approval stage in March 2022. Each condition had a reason attached to it in the notice letter which still need to be addressed in the final proposals.
- Note that Conditions 19 - Habitat Enhancement Plan (HEP) and Condition 20 - Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) that were refused under approval of details reserved by condition application ref. 220738 are now included within this variation application with revised proposals submitted. Consider that the previous version 1.1 of the HEP did not include specific measures to ensure the green links across the site are retained as per the requirement in Condition 19. This was raised with Vistry at a meeting held on 2nd November 2022. Vistry stated that the green links are included. However, CADRA would like to see these shown clearer on the plan.
- Note that the updated CEMP that has been submitted includes for additional surveys during and the deployment of an Ecological Clerk of Works during the construction phase on site.

- The application seeks to remove a large number of garages and replace them with parking spaces. If permitted development rights allow future construction of car ports, it will be important to limit this to an agreed standard design.
- The proposal to split the on-site play space into two areas within the development is welcomed.
- The proposed abandoning of the provision of heat pumps to all dwellings, on the grounds that the utility company says it doesn't have the network capacity is contrary to condition 5. The condition states that the development shall only be carried out in accordance with the approved documents and drawings, which include the Energy and Sustainability Strategy, and the use of heat pumps is a key part of Reading's Climate Emergency Strategy. CADRA urges RBC to ensure that the network capacity for heat pumps can be provided and not to accept the proposed amendment.

4.28 Keep Emmer Green (KEG)

- Each of the conditions attached to the approved planning permission ref. 211843 should be considered material and the request to remove should be refused. It is noted that two conditions (19, & 20) were included in a separate application number 220738, were refused and are now included in this application.
- Regardless of its efficacy and the individual changes being of varying importance, taken together, this application represents a major step away from the original proposal.
- For example, condition 5 relates to the provision of air source heat pumps (ASHP) in all houses. SSE have advised the developer that they are unable to service the 223 homes included in this development. The application is therefore reduced to 81 with the rest of the houses being supplied with the normal gas alternative. The RBC Sustainable Design and Construction SPD states that combustion based combined heat and power (CHP) should be avoided as it is a significant contributor to poor air quality. The document further states that ASHP as an alternative to gas fired CHP should be avoided and ground source heat pumps should be adopted as they enable greater seasonal efficiencies and are longer lasting than ASHP. The installation of heat pumps was a cornerstone of the planning proposal approved by the Council. We consider that any development on the site should be limited to those properties which can be provided with heat pumps. The failure of the developer to establish that heat pumps can now be fitted has led to this situation and the original application for heat pumps to be fitted to all homes should be strictly enforced.
- Condition 9 relates back to the emissions in Condition 8 and requires satisfaction before construction. In the rebuttal the developer talks of each phase of houses taking two years to build and uses this argument to suggest it is unreasonable to require compliance until the last, but one house is complete. Our understanding from the very start was that the entire site would be built out in 4/5 years so it is unlikely one phase will take half of that time.

- Approval of details relating to condition 10 (SuDS) and 17 (Arboricultural Method Statement) should take place before the development gets underway.
- Condition 22 requires that the developer achieves a 10% gain in habitat biodiversity units. This apparently, cannot be achieved on site and requires additional contributions, monetary or otherwise, either on site or elsewhere. The details supplied with the application do not make clear what percentage is represented by 3,589 habitat units.
- The application identifies 34 garages to be removed and be replaced with 2nd on plot parking spaces. It is accepted that garages are often used for storage of items other than vehicles and it is to be hoped that the car port replacements will be of good quality and enhance rather than detract from appearance.
- For the above reasons the request by the applicant not to comply with the various conditions imposed when the application was approved should be declined.

4.29 Other public comments:

- Concern about changes to SuDS strategy and removal of the attenuation basin in the northwest corner of the site and its replacement with additional play area space. This area is prone to becoming extremely boggy during wet weather. What provisions/assurances are in place that the existing waterlogging won't be exacerbated by the development and relocation of this attenuation basin to the detriment of Eric Avenue residents, whose homes and gardens back onto this part of the development.
- Reading has been named as a Climate Action Leader and In this context, it is worrying that instead of all 223 houses being heated by air-sourced heat pumps, as envisaged, only 81 will be and the remaining 142 will be supplied with gas boilers. This is blamed on the local electricity network operator.
- I do not see a major change in these applications to the original but there is a lot of detail to compare.
- Concern that details for the plans for the construction holding yard and on-site offices is not detailed in the new application. In the previous application these areas were set very close to my house which suggests to me that I will be disturbed by deliver lorries and movement of materials and staff for the long term of the build for the whole site.

5 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Procedural Guidance: The submitted application is to vary conditions attached to the original outline planning permission (under section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act) also known as an application for *minor material amendments* to a planning permission. The National Planning Practice Guide on such applications sets out that:

Permission granted under section 73 takes effect as a new, independent permission to carry out the same development as previously permitted subject to new or amended conditions. The new permission sits alongside the extant permission, which remains intact

and unamended. It is open to the applicant to decide whether to implement the new permission or the one originally granted.

A decision notice describing the new permission should be issued, setting out all the conditions related to it. To assist with clarity decision notices for the grant of planning permission under section 73 should also repeat the relevant conditions from the extant planning permission unless they have already been discharged.

As a section 73 application cannot be used to vary the time limit for implementation, this condition must remain unchanged from the extant permission.

If the original permission was subject to a planning obligation, then this may need to be the subject of a deed of variation.

There is no statutory definition of a ‘minor material amendment’ but it is likely to include any amendment where its scale and/or nature results in a development which is not substantially different from the one which has been approved.

Section 73 applications are considered against the Development plan and material considerations, under section 38(6) of the 2004 Act, and conditions attached to the existing permission. Local planning authorities should, in making their decisions, focus their attention on national and development plan policies, and other material considerations which may have changed significantly since the original grant of permission.

If a section 73 application is granted a new decision notice referring to the permission as being granted under s73 should be issued, including the conditions attached to the new permission and restating the conditions imposed on earlier permissions that continue to have effect.

- 5.2 In addition to the above, Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.

National Policy

- 5.3 National Planning Policy Framework (2021). The following chapters are the most relevant (others apply to a lesser extent):
2. Achieving sustainable development
 4. Decision-making
 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes
 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
 9. Promoting sustainable transport
 11. Making effective use of land
 12. Achieving well-designed places
 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 15. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment
- 17. Facilitating the sustainable use of minerals

Local Policy

- 5.4 Central and Eastern Berkshire Minerals and Waste Plan (2023)
- 5.5 Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019).

The relevant policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC4: Decentralised Energy
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9: Securing Infrastructure

- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
- EN7: Local Green Space and Public Open Space
- EN8: Undesignated Open Space
- EN9: Provision of Open Space
- EN10: Access to Open Space
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN13: Major Landscape Feature
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- EN17: Noise generating equipment
- EN18: Flooding and Drainage

- H1: Provision of Housing
- H2: Density and Mix
- H3: Affordable Housing
- H5: Standards for New Housing
- H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space

- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

- RL6: Protection of Leisure Facilities and Public Houses
- OU1: New and Existing Community Facilities

- CA1: SITES FOR DEVELOPMENT IN CAVERSHAM AND EMMER GREEN

CA1b PART OF READING GOLF COURSE, KIDMORE END ROAD

Development for residential and replacement clubhouse, subject to the future provision of golf on the remainder of the Golf Club site, which fulfils an important sports and leisure function for Reading, being secured. On-site facilities should be provided to mitigate impacts on community infrastructure, including for healthcare. On-site public open space will be provided.

Development should:

- *Avoid adverse effects on important trees including those protected by TPO;*
- *Provide a green link across the site from Kidmore End Road to the remainder of the golf course, rich in plant species and habitat opportunities;*
- *Ensure that vehicular access is provided from suitable roads to the area to be retained for golf;*
- *Take measures to mitigate impacts on the highway network, particularly on Kidmore End Road and Tanners Lane;*
- *Include all parking requirements within the site to avoid exacerbating parking issues on existing streets;*
- *Take account of potential archaeological significance; and*
- *Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water, and make provision for upgrades where required.*

Site size: 3.75 ha 90-130 dwellings, community provision including healthcare and replacement clubhouse



5.6 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

- Affordable Housing (March 2021)
- Employment, Skills and Training (2013)
- Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
- Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)
- Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

5.7 Other relevant documents include:

- Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)
- Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)
- Reading Open Space Strategy Update Note (2018)
- Reading Open Space Strategy (2007)
- The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017
- National Design Guide
- National Design Codes

- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (Amended 2015)
- Berkshire (including South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment
- BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight - A guide to good practice, 2nd edition (2011)
- DCLG Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard (2015)
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design dated July 2020 (Department for Transport)
- Manual For Streets 2007 (Department for Transport)
- CD 195 - Designing for cycle traffic (Standards for Highways 2020)
- Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan 2020-2030 (LCWIP) (November 2019)
- The Reading Climate Change Partnership's (RCCP) Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-25 (November 2020)

5.8 To set the site in the context of the adjoining land this portion of the Reading Golf Course land ownership contains designations with the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035. As set out in the plan extracts below designations include an Area of Ancient Woodland (known as Cucumber Wood) and Conservation Target Areas. The application site is also set approximately 1km from the edge of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).



Extract from South Oxford Local Plan Proposals Map and key



6 APPRAISAL

- 6.1 In granting outline planning permission ref. 211843 last year, it was established that the proposals did not represent the form of development envisaged under Policy CA1b and that the application satisfactorily demonstrated that the specific form of development outlined under Policy CA1b was not able to be delivered. Therefore, the application was determined based on the other relevant policies in the Local Plan, as set out above and other material planning considerations.
- 6.2 In summary, the primary reasons for this were that the development encompasses an area significantly larger than the allocated land under the policy which removed any potential for an 18-hole golf course to be provided on the remainder of the site. Reading Golf Club (RGC) had also already vacated the site at the time when the application was considered and made the move to Caversham Heath Golf Club. A reduced short form family golf facility was also already operating on the remaining part of the golf course within South Oxfordshire.
- 6.3 The proposed variations to the outline planning permission do not change the above assessment with the application site area remaining the same, Reading Golf Club have now fully relocated elsewhere and the short form family golf facility in South Oxfordshire still in operation. The current proposals should therefore again not be assessed against Policy CA1b but against the other relevant policies within the Local Plan and other material planning considerations.
- 6.4 As set out in the Section 5 of this report under 'Relevant Planning Policy and Guidance' an application submitted under section 73 allows the Local Planning Authority to only consider the proposed amendments to the conditions and any other changes in circumstances or policies since the original grant of planning permission. If permission to amend the plans is granted, this has the effect of granting a new outline planning permission for the development.
- 6.5 Therefore, this report will consider the proposed changes and variations to the approved development as outlined in Section 3 of this report. The main points to consider are the impact of the proposed changes on:
- Loss of Undesignated Open Space
 - Unit Mix and Affordable Housing
 - Layout / Scale / Landscaping

- Protected Trees, Ecology and Biodiversity
- Transport Matters
- Sustainability
- Impact on Residential Amenity
- Pollution / Water Resources and SUDS
- Archaeological Significance
- Community Facilities
- S106 / CIL

Loss of Undesignated Open Space

- 6.6 In granting outline planning permission for the approved development, it was established that the undeveloped land that would be lost from building on the golf course was, in the context of the Local Plan and the Council's Open Spaces Strategy, considered to be 'undesignated open space' and therefore Policy EN8 (Undesignated Open space) was engaged. Where a development results in a loss of undesignated space the relevant assessment under Policy EN8 is:

'Development may be permitted where it is clearly demonstrated that replacement open space, of a similar standard and function, can be provided at an accessible location close by, or that improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space can be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space'.

- 6.7 The application site is 12.15ha. in size and once ancillary structures associated with the former golf course use of the site have been accounted for there is currently 11.44ha. of undesignated space on site. For the approved development, 7.80ha. of the identified undesignated open space was to be provided in a mixture of private and public areas of green space with 3.64ha. lost to built form and associated infrastructure. Private garden areas do not count towards undesignated open space and make up 3.17ha. of the development and therefore the total loss of undesignated space approved under the extant outline permission is 6.81ha., with a total of 4.63ha. of the undesignated open space to be re-provided within the development. Of the 4.63ha., 3.89ha. is to be provided as public open space, including play areas, public parks and gardens, amenity green space and natural and semi-natural spaces and 0.74ha. as public green spaces which includes street planting and SuDS.
- 6.8 In granting outline planning permission for the outline scheme it was concluded that the development satisfied the second criteria of Policy EN8 (i.e. by providing '*improvements to recreational facilities on remaining open space ca be provided to a level sufficient to outweigh the loss of the open space*'). This conclusion was reached primarily on the basis of granting public access to the remaining 4.63ha. of undesignated open space which was considered to be a significant improvement/benefit given there was no public access permitted to the former private golf course use of the site.
- 6.9 Other improvements to the remaining open space within the approved development included provision of recreational facilities in the form of a Locally Equipped Area of Play (LEAP) and filling in one of the few remaining gaps in access to recreational public open space in the Borough as recognised in the Open Spaces Strategy (2007) and subsequent Update Note to support the Local Plan (2018).

- 6.10 The layout of the proposed areas of public open space within the approved development was also considered be a benefit of the development with the main areas located centrally and along the northeast boundary being connected and providing a significant area of continuous publicly accessible public open space. The approved development also incorporates a net gain in tree planting on the site, focused around the areas of open space to be retained, as well as a number of biodiversity mitigation measures.
- 6.11 The proposed changes to the layout, as described in section 3 of this report, result in changes to the green and open space provision within the development. The make-up of these spaces within the amended development layout proposed and comparison with the approved development is shown in the table below :

		APPROVED DEVELOPMENT	PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT
<u>PUBLIC OPEN SPACE</u>	Equipped/Designated Play Area	0.16ha	0.16ha
	Parks and Gardens	1.01ha	1.03ha (+0.02ha)
	Amenity Green Space	1.33ha	1.01ha (-0.32ha)
	Natural and Semi-Natural	1.39ha	1.77ha (+0.6ha)
	TOTAL PUBLIC OPEN SPACE	3.89ha	3.97ha (+0.08ha)
<u>PUBLIC GREEN SPACE</u>	SuDS	0.50ha	0.24ha (-0.26ha)
	Street Planting	0.24ha	0.34ha (+0.1ha)
	TOTAL PUBLIC GREEN SPACE	0.74ha	0.58ha (-0.16ha)
	TOTAL UNDESIGNATED OPEN SPACE:	4.63ha	4.55ha (-0.08ha)
<u>PRIVATE GREEN SPACE</u>	Front Garden	0.37ha	0.43ha (+0.06ha)
	Rear Garden		2.46ha (-0.34ha)
	TOTAL PRIVATE GREEN SPACE	2.80ha	2.89ha (-0.28ha)
	TOTAL PUBLIC & PRIVATE GREEN SPACE	7.80ha	7.44ha (-0.36ha)

Table 1 - Approved and Proposed Green Space Provision (with proposed change in provision compared to that approved shown in brackets)

- 6.12 The proposed amended layout results in a reduction in the overall quantum of undesignated space to be retained as part of the proposed development from 4.63ha to 4.55ha. As can be seen from the table above this is primarily as a result of a reduction in site area required for SuDS as a result of the proposed consolidation of the drainage strategy for the development, which includes removal of two of the four previously approved attenuation basins. The changes to the drainage strategy are discussed later in this report. The reduction in site area required for SuDS results in a 0.16ha. reduction in the overall provision of public green space (which includes areas of SuDS and Street Planting) compared to the approved development.
- 6.13 However, the revised layout, in part as a result of the reduction in quantum of space require for SuDS, does result in an overall increase of 0.08ha. in the total areas of Public Open Space to be provided within the development from

3.89ha. to 3.97ha. The areas of Public Open Space include Play Areas, Park and Public Garden areas, areas of Amenity Green Space and areas of Natural and Semi-Natural Space. Natural and Semi-Natural Areas are less maintained areas where grasses, wildflowers and trees are left to develop more naturally and are of most biodiversity benefit. Park and Garden areas are more manicured and maintained areas for informal recreation activities, whilst Amenity Green Space areas are characterised as ‘in between areas’ with characteristics of both Natural and Semi-Natural Area and Park and Garden areas. All areas of Public Open Space contain new tree planting.

- 6.14 Whilst the revised proposals result in a reduction in the amount of undesignated open space to be provided within the development, the relevant part of Policy EN8 requires an assessment of the ‘improvements’ to retained undesignated space. In this respect it is considered that providing 0.08ha. more Public Open Space would present greater public benefit and improvements to the retained undesignated open space, in terms of providing more usable areas of open space for occupiers of the development and the local community, when compared to the loss of 0.16ha of Public Green Space (SuDS and areas of street planting) which by their nature are less usable. In addition, it should be noted that the amount of street planting within the areas of Public Green Space is proposed to increase by 0.01ha compared to the approved development and that that is land required for SuDS only that is being reduced.
- 6.15 Within the increased amount of on-site Public Open Space to be provided as part of the development, the composition of the different types of open space is also proposed to be amended. Notably this includes a 0.6ha. increase in the amount of Natural and Semi-Natural Open Space and a 0.32ha. reduction in Amenity Green Space. . This change can be seen within the main strip of Public Open Space along the northeast boundary of the site, adjacent to the rear gardens of the existing properties along Brooklyn Drive. A 0.2ha. increase in Park and Garden Areas is also proposed. Total play area provision (Locally Equipped Area of Play - LEAP) remains the same at 0.16ha., but this provision is now spread across two play areas. A second play area is now proposed in the southwest corner of the site where one the SuDS basins has been removed, in addition to the play area located centrally within the site which was proposed under the approved development.



Legend:

	Site Boundary
	Equipped Play Area
	Park and Garden
	Amenity Green Space
	Natural and Semi-natural Open Space
	SUDs
	Incidental Areas - Planting
	Front Gardens
	Private Rear Gardens

Above - Proposed Open Space Layout

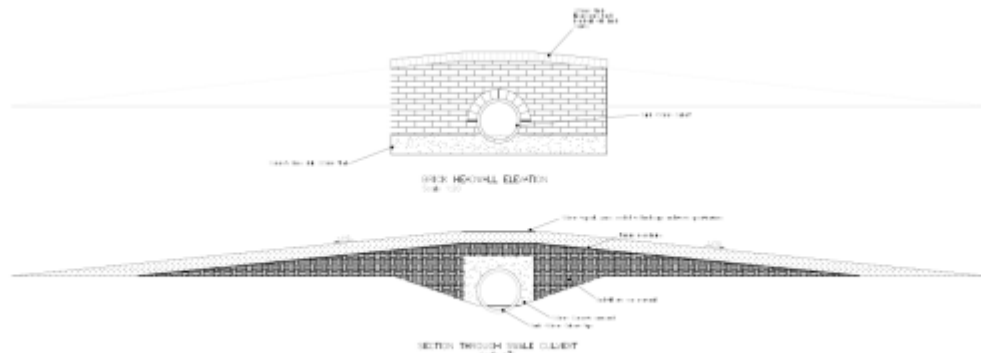
Below - Approved Open Space Layout



- 6.16 The Applicant has advised that the changes to the SuDS layout for the development is again the main driver behind the change in composition of the areas of Public Open Space. Notably the drainage swale (a longitudinal reed bed) connecting the attenuation basin in the northeast corner of the site with the basin located centrally with the site, is proposed to be relocated from a position running along the site boundary with the rear gardens of existing properties to Brooklyn Drive, to a position further west within the open space, closer to the proposed northern cul de sac within the development.
- 6.17 The re-location of the swale is considered to be an improvement to the quality of this area of open space and means that an uninterrupted area of open space along the site boundary can be provided. Given no works would now be required here to provide or maintain the swale in this location this land is now proposed to be provided as Natural and Semi Natural Open Space as opposed to Amenity Green Space. This provides for a more natural green buffer along the northeast of the site with the rear gardens of the Brooklyn Drive properties and greater potential for ecological enhancements in this part of the site. This part of the site is also where many of the retained trees are located and therefore designating this part of the site as Natural and Semi-Natural Open

space is welcomed and will ensure greater protection to the root protection areas (RPAs) of retained trees in this part of the site.

- 6.18 A consequence of relocating the swale is that it potentially creates a barrier to access to the main area of public open space to future occupiers of the dwellings in the northern part of the site. To address this it is proposed to provide a series of five culverted crossing points over the swale, which spans the length of the northeast part of the public open space. Officers are satisfied that the five crossing points ensure accessibility to this area of public open space is maintained from the northwest part of the development whilst also adding a degree of visual interest to the swale channel and area of open space.



Section drawings of proposed swale crossings



Approved location of attenuation swale in northeast corner of site



Proposed location of attenuation swale, in northeast corner of site, including crossing points

- 6.19 As per the approved development, the other proposed areas of Natural and Semi-Natural Open space would wrap around the north boundary of the site with the remainder of the golf course in South Oxfordshire, and around the

northwest boundary of the site with the rear gardens of existing dwellings on Eric Avenue where the other significant grouping of retained trees within the site is located.

6.20 The other notable change proposed within the Public Open Space provision is the addition of 0.2ha. of Park and Garden. Within the approved development, this space was located centrally within the site as a focal point around the central play area from where footpaths lead off and connect with the other areas of Public Open and Green Space within the development. A similar approach is proposed for the revised development but based around a larger area of Park and Garden which, similar to the enlarged area of Natural and Semi-Natural Space, replaces areas previously proposed as Amenity Green Space under the approved development. Officers welcome the enlarged area of Park and Garden space which provides greater opportunities for informal recreation and community activities in this central part of the site. In addition to the enlarged areas of Natural and Semi-Natural Spaces discussed above, which have benefits in terms of retained trees and ecology, this is considered to strike an appropriate balance between the mix of Public Open Spaces within the development.

6.21 The proposed additional play area (LEAP) in the southwest corner of the site is also considered to present a further ‘improvement’ to the retained areas of public open space within the development in the context of Policy EN8 in terms of approval accessibility to play areas for future occupiers in the northern part of the site.



Approved location of attenuation basin in northwest corner of the site



Proposed additional play space in northwest corner of site in place of previously proposed attenuation basin

- 6.22 Officers advise that the composition of public and green spaces within the overall general layout of these areas of open space remains broadly as per the approved development with the principal areas located along the northeast boundary of the site extending down and connecting to central part of the site, ensuring that a significant area of continuous usable public open space is provided. It is considered that the changes proposed under the variation application would still provide for an overarching green, verdant and open character to the residential development.
- 6.23 A further key aspect of the layout of green and open spaces within the development was provision of a green link connecting the northwest boundary with the remainder of the golf course land site in South Oxfordshire through the site to the eastern boundary with Kidmore End Road. The green link is required to satisfy Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) which states that opportunities should be sought in conjunction with development proposals to enhance the quality and integrity of the green network and that the green network.
- 6.24 The green link secured under the approved development runs along the main area of Public Open space in the northwest corner of the site through the central area of Park and Garden and then along the tree planting and verge of Amenity Green Space which spans the length of the spine road towards the site entrance with Kidmore End Road. The proposed revised layout would ensure this green link through the site is maintained. Furthermore, the revised layout is considered to enhance the green link through provision of a wider grass verge along the spine road.
- 6.25 The application explains that other layout changes to the built aspects of the proposals have also been required which have used up some of the space previously occupied by SuDS. These changes are largely related to vehicle parking provision for all the dwellings with all spaces having to be made 50cm wider to ensure they are fully accessible and adaptable for wheelchair users in accordance with section M4(2) of The Building Regulations and as required by Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing). Visitor Parking spaces within the

development have also been increased significantly, from 4 to 13. The merits of the parking changes are discussed later in this report.

- 6.26 Furthermore, under the approved development a number of dwellings that were proposed to be served by two parking spaces were served by a driveway space and a garage. The variation application proposes that the garages to a number of the larger dwellings would be pushed back in the individual plots to allow two driveway parking spaces and a garage to be provided to facilitate an additional parking space. This change also contributes to the changes to open space within the development. As noted in table 1 above, there would be an overall 0.34ha. reduction in private rear garden spaces within the development from 2.8ha. to 2.64ha. Notwithstanding this, the layout changes have resulted in a greater overall proportion of the site being taken up by private front garden areas, from 0.37ha. to 0.43ha. (an increase of 0.06ha.).
- 6.27 Officers consider that the proposed changes to the open space provision would still result in a development whereby the proposed improvements to the quality and layout of the remaining on-site open space would, on balance, outweigh the overall proposed loss of open space, and therefore demonstrate compliance with Policy EN8.
- 6.28 In addition, the development proposed by the variation application would continue to secure the s106 contributions of £250,000 towards provision of an off-site MUGA (multi-use games area) within the local area and £307,500 towards improvements to play equipment at Emmer Green Playing Fields, which together with the on-site provision of recreational facilities in the form of two play areas, is considered to ensure compliance with Policy EN9 (Provision of Open Space) is maintained.
- 6.29 The amended proposals would also, as per the approved development, incorporate improvements to retained undesignated space in the form of a net gain in on-site tree planting and biodiversity mitigation measures. The requirement for the developer to provide and management of all areas of proposed on-site open space within the development would continue to be secured by way of section 106 obligations, as per the approved outline planning permission.

Unit Mix and Affordable Housing

- 6.30 The proposed variation application seeks to amend the housing mix of the proposed development. The proposed changes are shown in table 3 below:

	Consented Mix	Proposed Mix
Affordable Housing	10 x 1-bed flat/maisonette	10 x 1-bed flat/maisonette
	6 x 2-bed flat	6 x 2-bed flat
	18 x 2-bed house	14 x 2-bed house
	13 x 3-bed house	17 x 3-bed house
	20 x 4-bed house	20 x 4-bed house
Market Housing	47 x 2-bed house	41 x 2-bed house
	50 x 3-bed house	57 x 3-bed house
	51 x 4-bed house	48 x 4-bed house
	8 x 5-bed house	10 x 5-bed house

Table 3 - Approved and Proposed Unit Mix

- 6.31 Policy H2 (Density and Mix) requires that at least 50% of the homes outside centres will be three-bed or larger. The approved development includes 63.7% of 3-bed or larger dwellings. The amendments proposed to the housing mix reduce the number of 1 and 2-bed flats/houses and provide a greater number of 3, 4 and 5 bed houses. The proposals result in an increased proportion (68.2%) of 3-bed or larger dwellings within the development. This revised unit mix is further in excess of the Policy H2 requirements that the approved development and is considered to be beneficial change in terms of providing a greater proportion of much-needed family sized housing.
- 6.32 Condition no. 13 of the outline planning permission secured the approved unit mix and would therefore need to be amended to reflect the revised mix now proposed.
- 6.33 Policy H3 (Affordable Housing) seeks residential development to make an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading. For developments of 10 or more dwellings, the required level of provision is 30% of units on site to be provided as affordable homes. The approved development is policy compliant in this respect and would provide 67 (30%) of the proposed dwellings as affordable housing. This would also be at a policy compliant tenure split of 62% Affordable rented accommodation at 'Reading affordable rent' levels - at and 38% Affordable home ownership (shared ownership or another product) in accordance with the adopted Affordable Housing SPD (2021).
- 6.34 The proposed variation application does not seek to amend the number of affordable units which would remain at 67 and a Policy H3 compliant level of 30% of the total number of proposed dwellings. However, the proposals do incorporate fewer two-bedroom houses and more three-bed houses within the affordable housing mix which is considered to be a beneficial change in terms of providing a greater proportion of larger family sized affordable housing units.
- 6.35 RBC Housing have suggested that a five-bedroom house is incorporated as part of the affordable housing offer. However, the developer maintains that the affordable offer already provides for a wide range of dwellings including a significant number of 2, 3 and 4 bedroom family sized dwellings and has confirmed that it is not proposed to include a 5 bedroom unit in the affordable housing mix. Whilst this is disappointing, officers acknowledge that the proposals provide for a good range of family sized units which is still considered to comply with Policy H3 which outlines the need for family size units as being for 2+ bedroom houses. In addition, given the approved development, which the developer could still implement, does not incorporate any 5-bedroom dwellings, it is not considered that the lack of a 5-bedroom dwelling within the affordable housing mix could be justified as a reason for refusal of the application.
- 6.36 The plan below shows the location of the affordable dwellings within the revised development layout. Officers welcome the location of the units which are considered to be spread out throughout the development. Notably many of the affordable units would be provided within the first phases of the development to be built, which would be located within the eastern part of the site closest to Kidmore End Road. The provision of the revised on-site affordable housing mix would also be secured by way of variation of the section 106 legal agreement.

Affordable - 67 Dwellings

- Shared Ownership
- Affordable Rent



Plan Showing Proposed Location of Affordable Housing Within the Development

Layout and Scale

Within the Development

- 6.37 The golf course has an open, verdant, sylvan character at present when viewed from within the site itself. However, due to the combination of topography, vegetation, but primarily built form, views of the site are limited to those in residential receptors which abut the site boundaries; individuals who pass the site on Kidmore End Road; and those receptors at work; at school, visiting the community facilities; or the public open space at Emmer Green Playing Fields
- 6.38 Section 12 of the NPPF, 'Achieving well-designed places', reinforces the importance of good design in achieving sustainable development, by ensuring the creation of inclusive and high-quality places. Paragraph 130 of the NPPF includes the need for new design to function well and add to the quality of the surrounding area, establish a strong sense of place, and respond to local character and history, including the surrounding built environment and landscape setting, while not preventing or discouraging appropriate innovation or change.
- 6.39 NPPF Paragraph 134. sets out that 'Significant weight should be given to:
a) development which reflects local design policies and government guidance on design, taking into account any local design guidance and supplementary planning documents such as design guides and codes; and/or

- b) outstanding or innovative designs which promote high levels of sustainability or help raise the standard of design more generally in an area, so long as they fit in with the overall form and layout of their surroundings. The NPPF therefore makes it clear that creating high quality buildings and places is fundamental to what the planning and development process should achieve.
- 6.40 Local Plan Policy CC7 'Design and the Public Realm' sets out the local requirements with regard to design of new development and requires that all developments must be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area in which it is located. The aspects of design include: layout; urban structure and urban grain; landscape; density and mix; scale: height and massing; and architectural detail and materials.
- 6.41 Notwithstanding the proposed changes to the layout of open spaces within the development discussed above, the layout of the proposals in terms of pattern of built development such as location of dwellings and roads and separation distances of built form to site boundaries remains largely the same as under the approved development. As set out in section 3 of this report there are a variety of minor tweaks proposed to the layout of each dwelling including changes to layout of driveways and garages, changes to orientation and introduction of a greater proportion of larger dwellings within the unit mix. Other minor changes include addition of a substation opposite plot no. 26 to help with energy load requirements for electric vehicle charging points and air source heat pumps and inclusion of three glass bottle recycling banks for use by future occupiers of the development and the local community. The bottle banks are proposed to be located to the north of proposed crescent of townhouses close to the Kidmore End Road frontage of the development.
- 6.42 These minor alterations are not considered to result in a form of development which differs significantly to that subject of the existing outline planning permission. Details of the appearance of the substation would be secured under the reserved matter of Appearance.
- 6.43 The proposed variation application also does not seek to amend the proposed development in terms of scale, with dwellings proposed as 2 and 2½ storeys and the inclusion of the two locations for three storey buildings to accommodate the crescent of townhouses towards the Kidmore End Road frontage and central flatted block. Condition no. 12 of the extant permission requires that details of the finished floor level of the development are submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Details of the proposed finished floor levels have been submitted part of this variation of condition application. The submitted plans are considered to be acceptable and demonstrate that the finished floor levels of the dwellings would be reflective of existing site levels and the levels of the land and existing dwellings that surrounding the site. Therefore, it is recommended that condition 12 is converted to a compliance condition to require that the development is undertaken in accordance with the submitted finished floor level plans.
- 6.44 As per the extant outline permission, matters of Appearance are sought as a reserved matter so are not under consideration as part of this application. However, a separate reserved matters application which seeks approval of the appearance matters of the development is on the committee agenda for consideration, under Item 14.

- 6.45 Subject to this application satisfactorily demonstrating that the proposed changes are acceptable in terms of trees, ecology and biodiversity matters (considered separately in this report) it is considered that the proposals would continue to result in a layout that would provide a high quality and attractive place to live and is sympathetic to the landscape setting of the site whilst also providing good quality, appropriate areas of usable open space and public realm.
- 6.46 The proposed variations to the approved development, in terms of layout within the site are not considered to alter the conclusions reached in the assessment of the development that is subject of the extant permission and no conflict with Section 12 and paragraphs 130 and 134 of the NPPF or Policy CC7 as set out above is identified.

Wider Area of Landscape

- 6.47 The site, as existing, is bounded on two sides by residential and community uses but the northern boundary is open to the remainder of the Golf Course land within South Oxfordshire, with the boundary of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty set between 1km and 2km to the North. Policy EN13 (Major Landscape Areas) requires that the impact of development upon the setting of the AONB is assessed. Although they have not responded to the consultation on this variation planning application, The Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB) advised in relation to the outline application that the south and south-east of the AONB boundary around Kidmore End, is sensitive and falls within the wider setting of the AONB and that much of this landscape would justify the status of a 'valued landscape', consistent with the guidance in the NPPF at 174.
- 6.48 In granting outline permission for the approved development, officers concluded that (subject to the recommended conditions and section 106 obligations) the proposals would satisfactorily protect both local and longer-range landscape views of the site. The Applicant provided a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) which was assessed as part of the application.
- 6.49 This conclusion was on the basis that if the application site is considered to form part of the wider setting of the AONB and wider valued landscape area then the overall impact on these areas would be negligible, given the distance and topography between the site and the edge of the AONB. In addition, separation distances and natural green buffers to the site boundaries, including that proposed to the northern boundary with the remainder of the former golf course land, the scale of buildings proposed, as well as the overall level of tree planting and quantum of open space provision within the development was considered to contribute towards providing an appropriate form of development within the wider landscape setting of the site.
- 6.50 It was also concluded that the given the proposed development would infill the parcel of former golf course land that is surrounded by established residential streets to three of its boundaries and the extent of development is not considered to appear out of context with the character of edge of settlement residential areas in this part of Caversham, particularly in terms of lighting impacts on night-time character. The proposals would not project beyond the general edge of settlement line of this part of Caversham closer to the AONB.
- 6.51 The proposed amendments to the development do not significantly alter the overall pattern of the development, number of dwellings proposed or their

scale. separation distances to boundaries and overall levels of landscaping and tree planting remain reflective of the approved development and therefore the proposed changes are not considered to materially alter how the development would appear or relate when viewed from the surrounding area. No additional impacts upon locally or nationally designated landscapes surrounded the site are identified.

- 6.52 The proposed variation to the approved development in terms of layout within the site are not considered to alter the conclusions reached in the assessment of the development that is subject of the extant permission and no conflict with Paragraph 174 of the NPPF and Policies EN13 and CC7 is identified.
- 6.53 In terms of heritage impacts, Policy EN1 (Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment) seeks that the development should protect and where possible enhance the significance of heritage assets including their setting. There are a series of Listed Buildings scattered throughout the wider townscape. Old Grove House (Grade II*) and The Barn (Grade II) at Highdown Hill Road are the closest to the Site but are located over 125m from the application site with existing built form of a residential street in between. As per the approved development the variation proposals are not considered to materially impact on the setting of these listed buildings. Surley Row Conservation Area is located over 400m from the application site and similarly separate by built form and residential streets such that there is not considered to be any impact of the setting of this Conservation Area.

Impact on residential amenity

Existing Residential Properties

- 6.54 The proposed layout and scale of the development are for consideration at this stage. The existing properties to be impacted by the proposed built form of the development are the dwellings that adjoin the site. As set out above the overall pattern of built development siting of dwellings reflects that approved under the existing permission. The layout allows predominately back-to-back relationships with adjoining residential plots and these back-to-back distances meet a minimum of 20 metres to ensure that adequate levels of privacy are provided between existing and the new development. Due to this relationship between the proposed dwellings and neighbouring properties it is not considered that the proposed minor changes to layout of individual dwellings within the development would have an adverse impact on neighbours in terms of loss of light and privacy in accordance with Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity). Similarly, outlook for existing residents who look out on to the application site is not considered to be materially altered when compared to the approved development and the proposed changes are not considered to result in any significant detriment to these existing occupiers. It should be reiterated that right to a view is not a material planning consideration.

Future residents

- 6.55 Policy H5 provides a series of standards which all new build housing should be built to with Policy H10 requiring dwellings to be provided with functional private or communal outdoor space. Policy CC8 also stipulates a number of factors that new residential developments should be considered against. As indicated by the site plans provided Officers are satisfied that the minor layout changes to the dwellings would not prevent the proposed dwellings from

achieving the minimum areas for different sizes and types of dwellings proposed, as set out in nationally described space standard, referred to in Policy H5. Amenity space sizes are also provided in line with Policy H10 for flatted units where communal space is accepted. As per the extant outline permission the final appearance of each individual dwellings is to be determined at the reserved matters stage (reserved matters are under consideration as item 14 on the agenda). In relation to the individual houses proposed these would all be served by private garden amenity space, the quantum of which for each is considered to be acceptable.

- 6.56 The proposed layout also demonstrates that the relationship of dwellings within the site to each other is satisfactory to ensure that dwellings have adequate privacy, little visual dominance, or harm to outlook. Crime and the fear of crime also have a major impact on quality of life and the wellbeing of building occupants. Enabling occupants to feel safe and secure is therefore essential to successful, sustainable communities and is supported by Policy CC7 'Design and the public realm'. Relationships between buildings and open space in the site are largely reflective of those approved under the extant permission and the condition (condition no. 43) recommended by Thames Valley Police Crime Prevention Design Advisor to secure submission and approval of a Security Strategy for the development would be re-applied should the variation application be granted.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS)

- 6.57 Policy EN18 (Flooding and Sustainable Drainage Systems) requires all major category developments incorporate SuDS. As discussed above the variation proposals seek to reconfigure the SuDS strategy for the development that was approved under the extant permission by way of removal of two of the four drainage attenuation basins proposed under the approved development and re-siting the swale within the main area of public open space in the northeast corner of the site. The principal driver behind the SuDS layout change is to align with natural gradients across the site to encourage drainage flows.
- 6.58 Whilst the surface water drainage scheme has been revised to remove some of the previously proposed attenuation basins the scheme now includes other water storage methods across the site including the provision of permeable paving as compensation.
- 6.59 Permeable paving had not been initially proposed given that detailed and extensive ground investigations had not been undertaken at the time outline planning permission was granted. The applicant, having now undertaken this exercise, has established that percolation into the ground is achievable in some areas across the site, in particular at the eastern boundary of the site and therefore this has allowed for the reduction in the number of basins required. The proposal also includes for the provision of other surface water storage under parking areas and driveways with these being lined areas with water discharging to the wider drainage network, however the underground water storage will slow down surface run-off from those developed areas.
- 6.60 The previously proposed attenuation basin in the southwestern corner of the site was located on the high side of the development and as a result only limited run-off could be taken to this basin without it being overly deep in an area where there are numerous retained trees. Therefore, by adjusting the central and northern attenuation basins this has allowed for the removal of this feature.

- 6.61 The main the drainage strategy for the site would see drained water travel to the central attenuation basin where it will be stored and released at a rate of 3 litres per second into the swale that connects to the northern basin and will then discharge into the ground. The proposed surface water network includes sufficient surface water storage in which to facilitate a slowing down of the discharge into the ground creating a betterment of attenuation across the site.
- 6.62 The revised drainage strategy has been reviewed by the RBC Lead Local Flood Authority Officer (LLFA) who considers the revised proposals to be acceptable. It is recommended that condition no.10 of extant outline permission be re-applied should the variation application be approved, to require details of the maintenance and management strategy for the SuDs to be submitted to and agreed by the LPA prior to commencement of the development.

Protected Trees, Landscaping, Ecology and Biodiversity

- 6.63 Policy CC7 (Design and Public Realm) states that all new development should be of high design quality that maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area including by way of landscaping. Policy EN12 (Biodiversity and the Green Network) states that planning permission will not be granted for developments which would negatively impact on the 'green network' including 'Green Links' and that on all sites development should not result in a net loss of biodiversity and provide for a net gain in biodiversity where possible.
- 6.64 Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands) seeks that individual trees, groups of trees and hedges will be protected from damage or removal where they are of importance, that Reading's vegetation cover is extended, and that the quality of waterside vegetation is maintained or enhanced. New development shall make provision for tree retention and planting to provide for biodiversity and to contribute to measures to reduce carbon and adapt to climate change.

Trees

- 6.65 The site is subject to Area TPO 4/18. When outline planning permission for the development was granted, it was established that the site and Area TPO contained 320 trees or groups of trees on or near the site. Of these existing trees 11 are high quality (category A) and comprise English oak and Scots pine; 119 are moderate quality (category B); 174 are low quality (category C) and 16 are unsuitable for retention quality (category U). The approved development requires that 112 trees are removed (35% of existing on-site tree stock) (223 to be retained) to allow the construction of the dwellings, parking spaces and associated infrastructure. Of the trees to be removed 15 are considered to be of moderate quality (category B), 73 are low quality (category C) and 9 are considered unsuitable for retention quality (category U).
- 6.66 The supporting information submitted with the variation application includes an addendum to the tree survey submitted with the original application and confirms that based on the revised layout, 7 trees previously shown to be removed can now be retained, meaning the total number of trees to be removed has been reduced to 105. The 7 trees which can now be retained are located in the main area of Natural and Semi-Natural Open space along the north-east boundary of the site and can be retained following the amendments to the position of the drainage swale discussed earlier in the report. The

addendum also states that since the outline application was approved, unfortunately 5 trees on the site have been lost in recent storms.

- 6.67 The information submitted with the variation application includes an arboricultural method statement (AMS) to demonstrate how all retained trees will be protected during the demolition and construction of the development. Under the extant outline permission, submission and approval of this document by the LPA is required prior to commencement of development under condition no. 17.
- 6.68 The Council's Natural Environment Officer has reviewed the submitted AMS and is satisfied that this report satisfactorily demonstrates suitable mitigation measures to ensure that the revised development can be carried out without adversely impacting upon retained trees. This satisfies the details required under condition no. 17 of the extant outline planning permission and therefore, should the proposed variation application be granted, this condition should be changed to a compliance condition to require the development to be carried out in accordance with the approved details. It should be noted that all trees on the site are protected by an area TPO and therefore any work to retained trees not set out in the AMS could not be carried out unless separate consent is obtained under a Tree Works application.
- 6.69 In terms of new trees, the outline permission secured planting of 196 new native trees across the site, resulting in an overall net gain of 84 trees. The variation application proposes that an additional 13 trees would be planted making a total of 209 new native trees across the site which is an overall net gain of 104 trees. This increase in tree planting is welcomed and is considered to be an additional benefit of the proposals when compared to the approved development.
- 6.70 The overall landscaping principles for the development remain aligned with that under the approved consent. As per the approved permission, the exact specifications of the tree planting as well as details of maintenance and management would continue to be secured by way of the recommended conditions (condition no. 14 - Hard and Soft Landscaping, condition no. 15 - Boundary Treatment and condition no. 16 - Landscape Management) and section 106 obligations should the variation permission be granted. It is considered that the revised development would continue to comply with Policies EN14 and CC7.

Ecology

- 6.71 The variation application is accompanied by an updated protected species survey which does not identify any significant changes in the ecological character of the site. The Council's Ecological Adviser has confirmed that this survey has been carried out to an appropriate standard and recommends that the conditions attached to the extant permission which secure submission and approval by the LPA of details of wildlife friendly landscaping, and that a scheme of ecological enhancements are carried across and re-applied if the variation application is approved.
- 6.72 The ecological enhancement principles set out in the variation application reflect those under the approved permission and include native tree and landscaping planted across the site, ecologically sensitive lighting to avoid impacts on bats, a minimum of 20 bat boxes on trees, a minimum of 20 bat roosting features on new buildings, a minimum of 20 bird boxes on trees, a

minimum of 10 swift boxes and 10 house sparrow boxes to be integrated in new buildings, a minimum of 5 large log piles, provision of a minimum of 10 hedgehog houses and creation of hedgehog highways through the site.

- 6.73 Condition no. 20 of the outline permission requires that a Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) is provided to demonstrate how the development would be constructed whilst minimising impacts on biodiversity. The submitted CEMP has been reviewed by the Council's Ecological Adviser who consider the document to be acceptable. Therefore, it is recommended that condition no. 20 be amended to a compliance condition to require the demolition and construction works to be undertaken in accordance with the CEMP.

Biodiversity

- 6.74 The proposed variation application includes information submitted to satisfy condition no. 22 of the existing outline permission which requires submission and approval of a scheme to demonstrate that the development would provide a 10% net gain in biodiversity units to include proposals for both on-site and off-site mitigation.
- 6.75 The submitted information in respect of condition no. 22 is under review by Officers and the LPA's Ecology adviser. Further information on this matter will be provided in an update report. At this stage, for the purposes of this report the recommendation shows condition no. 22 unchanged as per the extant outline permission and still requires the biodiversity net gain details to be submitted and agreed with the LPA prior to commencement of the development.

Transport

Traffic/Access Matters

- 6.76 RBC Transport Officers have reviewed the proposed variations to the approved plans and have advised that the proposed change to the housing mix, with a small increase in number of three and five bed dwellings, would not have a material impact on the character of the traffic associated with the development within the vicinity of the site. On this basis, Transport Officers advise that additional transport assessments and surveys beyond those carried out in support of original application and upon which outline planning permission was granted, are not required.
- 6.77 The means of accessing the site also remains unchanged from the original outline permission. The transport and highway-related improvements secured under the extant permission would continue to be secured under any new planning permission granted under this variation of condition application. The obligations are as follows:
- Provision of a car club and spaces for a minimum period of 5 years and a contribution of £10,000 to assist funding of a local Car Club provider
 - A contribution of £50,000 a year (for a minimum of 3 years and a maximum of 5 years) to support bus services serving the site within the Caversham area.

- A contribution of £100,000 to facilitate the appropriate changes at the junction of Peppard Road / Prospect Street / Henley Road / Westfield Road signalised control junction to increase capacity at the junction.
- To enter into a highway agreement for junction improvements to the Peppard Road / Kiln Road / Caversham Park Road to mitigate the predicted increases, in accordance with the proposed mitigation scheme illustrated on Drawing 45675/5511/005 and Figure 7.1 of the TA.
- To enter into a highway agreement to secure off-site highway works for pedestrians' improvements within the vicinity of the site as shown on concept drawing 45675/5511/004 and relocation of bus stop on Kidmore End Road as shown on concept drawing 45675/5510/001
- Submission, approval and adherence to a Travel Plan (including timetable for ongoing review and re-surveys)

Cycle Parking

6.78 The proposed variation application includes additional details beyond that provided with the approved outline permission in relation to the cycle parking arrangements for the development. This includes provision of 2 cycle parking spaces for each 1, 2, 3, 4 or 5 bedroom dwelling which would be located either in sheds/stores located in the rear gardens of the dwellings or within garages. For the proposed flats (1 and 2 bedroom), 1 cycle parking space would be provided per flat in a secure cycle store located on the ground floor of the building. The cycle parking provision proposed would exceed the minimum requirements set out in the Revised Parking Standards and Design SPD. See table below:

Type of Dwelling	SPD Minimum Requirement (spaces per dwelling type)	Proposed (spaces per dwelling type)
C3 Flat - 1 and 2 bed	0.5	1
C3 House - 1 bed	1	2
C3 House - 2 and 3 bed	2	2
C3 House - 4 + bed	2	2

Table showing Cycle Parking Provision

6.79 RBC Transport Officers are satisfied with the details of cycle parking provided. Condition no. 34 of the extant outline planning permission required details of how the cycle parking for the development would be provided on site to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to commencement of the development. Therefore, it is now recommended that condition no. 34 be amended to require the development to be carried out in accordance with the plans showing the cycle parking arrangements, with the cycle parking for each dwelling to be provided prior to its occupation.

Vehicle Parking

6.80 The proposed variation application also seeks to revise the vehicle parking proposals for the development. The approved development incorporated a policy compliant total of 442 vehicle parking spaces for the 223 dwellings (including 4 visitor parking spaces and 2 car club spaces). Condition no. 39 of the extant outline permission requires details of the exact layout of the vehicle parking areas within the development to be submitted and approved

by the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation of the first dwelling. The condition also stipulates that no dwelling shall be occupied until the vehicle parking serving it has been provided.

- 6.81 The revised parking proposals include an increased total number of vehicle parking spaces, to 524. The increase in spaces has arisen as a result of the proposed parking provision for the 4 and 5 bedroom houses being increased from 2 spaces per house to 3 (2 driveway spaces and a garage space). Each of the 1, 2 and 3 bedroom houses would be served by 2 vehicle parking spaces and whilst the 1 and 2 bedroom flats would be served by 1.5 space per flat. Layout plans of the proposed vehicle parking for all dwellings have been provided and are considered to be acceptable by RBC Transport Officers. It is therefore recommended that condition 39 is converted to a compliance condition to require the development to be implemented in accordance with the approval details. The condition shall continue to state that no dwelling shall be occupied until the vehicle parking serving it has been provided.
- 6.82 Even with the increase parking provision for 4 and 5 bedroom houses, Manual for Streets states that garages are not always used for car parking, and this can create additional demand for on-street parking. Research shows that in some developments, less than half the garages are used for parking cars, and that many are used primarily as storage. Therefore, the condition no. 40 of the outline permission would be carried across to any variation consent to secure that the garages are retained for vehicle parking only and to ensure that they are not converted to living accommodation under permitted development rights which would adversely impact on parking provision for the development.
- 6.83 In addition the submitted parking layout plan shows that the visitor vehicle parking spaces for the development has been increased from 4 spaces to 13 with these spaces spread out throughout the development, primarily as roadside lay by spaces on the secondary roads at the edges of the development. The visitor spaces are considered to be suitable spread throughout the development. The variation application initially proposed to provide 40 visitor parking spaces throughout the development however, this has been reduced down to 13 following concerns raised by RBC Transport that the siting of these spaces on the spine road and primary circulation roads within the development would narrow the roads and prevent them from being suitable for possible future use by bus services.
- 6.84 The proposed parking layout plan also indicates the location of the 2 car club spaces that are required to be provided within the development. One space would be located adjacent to the crescent of townhouses on the Kidmore End Road frontage of the site and the other being located further west into the development near to plot 128. RBC Transport Officers consider the location of the car club spaces to be acceptable and welcome that the spaces are spread out so as to provide as convenient access as is possible to occupiers of dwellings in the different parts of the development. The plans below show the location of the visitor and car club spaces within the development.



Plan showing layout of 13 x Visitor (blue dots) & 2 x Car Club (green dots) Parking Spaces

6.85 Condition no. 38 of the outline permission would be re-applied to any new variation of condition permission which requires full details of Electric Vehicle charging facilities for each dwelling to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority prior to occupation.

Traffic Calming Measures

6.86 The proposed variation of condition application also incorporates details of traffic calming measures to be provided on the new roads within the development. Details of these measures are sought under condition no. 41 of the outline permission with the details required to be submitted and agreed prior to the commencement of development.

6.87 The submitted plans show provision of speed bumps to be provided on the roads throughout the development site. RBC Transport Officers have confirmed that these traffic calming measures are considered to be acceptable and therefore it is recommended that if the variation of condition permission is granted, condition no. 41 is amended to a compliance condition to the require the development to be undertaken in accordance with the submitted details.

Refuse Storage and Collection

6.88 The proposals also include additional information beyond that provided when outline planning permission was granted in respect of refuse storage and collection arrangements for the development. Such details are sought under condition no.35 of the outline permission, with the details required to be submitted to and agreed by the LPA prior to occupation of each dwelling.

- 6.89 The submitted plans show that each dwelling would have space within the rear garden areas for storage of a refuse bin, recycling bin, food waste bin and also the optional green waste bin. RBC Waste Officers are satisfied that each dwelling would have sufficient waste storage capacity that the dwellings are laid out such that residents can conveniently drag the bins to kerbside for collection and back on the relevant Local Authority waste collection day. RBC Transport Officers are satisfied that refuse collection vehicles will be able to safely access all roads within the development to carry out the refuse collections.



- 6.90 Refuse storage for the flats would be within secured ground floor store area. RBC Waste Officers have confirmed that there is sufficient capacity within the store for storage of all waste streams (including food waste) for the 12 flats and that the store is located such that bins can be collected and emptied from it by waste collection operatives.

- 6.91 Should the variation of conditions application be granted then it is recommended that condition no. 35 is amended to a compliance condition to require the development to be undertaken in accordance with the proposed refuse collection arrangements. The condition requires the refuse storage for each dwelling or flat to be provided prior to its occupation.
- Sustainability

- 6.92 The proposals also seek to revise the renewable energy strategy for the development. The development which was granted outline planning permission proposed that each dwelling would be served by individual air source heat pumps (ASHPs) whilst photovoltaic panels were also proposed to be installed on the roofs of new dwellings with an equivalent area of 40% of the ground floor of each proposed dwelling. This approach was considered to comply with Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy Provision) which require major development to include decentralised energy provision.

- 6.93 Based upon the above strategy, the approved development was projected to achieve an 85% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over 2013 Building

Regulations requirements which exceeded Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing) minimum requirements of a 35% improvement. The remaining 15% for the development to achieve an overall zero carbon performance was required to be off-set by a financial contribution secured as part of the associated section 106 legal agreement.

- 6.94 The proposed revised renewable energy strategy for the development sets out that 81 of the 223 dwellings would be served by ASHPs. The supporting information submitted with the application explains that the sole reason for this reduction is due to the fact that the energy provider (Southern and Scottish Electricity Network - SSEN) does not have the available infrastructure to provide enough power to the development to allow every dwelling to be able to be served by an individual air source heat pump and that this situation is not likely to be rectified in the short to medium term future.
- 6.95 SSEN have advised that they can only provide 500kVA of power to the development as a whole and that 2153kVA would be required to serve the development if each dwelling has an electrical ASHP heating source. Therefore, due to the limits to the available electricity supply for the development the maximum number of ASHPs that can be provided is 81.
- 6.96 The developer has advised that in order to provide ASHPs for 81 dwellings they have also had to discount SSEN and switch electricity network supplier to UK Power Solutions (UKPS) due how they calculate loading on the network. Comparable alternate renewable energy sources such ground source heat pumps (GSHPs) also require electricity to operate and as such would be subject to similar limitations. Notwithstanding, this the use of GSHPs in the development was investigated previously prior to the outline permission being granted and was found to be unsuitable for the site. The primary reason for this was due to the site's location above a ground water protection zone and concerns regarding potential pollution leaks from underground GSHP infrastructure.
- 6.97 The revised energy strategy for the development confirms that all dwellings would continue to be served by photovoltaic panels and that panels are now also proposed to the block of flats which is not the case under the extant approval. The dwellings which are no longer proposed to be served by ASHPs would instead be served by high energy efficiency gas boilers.
- 6.98 As a result of the reduction in number of ASHPs, the development is now projected to achieve a 50.38% improvement in the dwelling emission rate over 2013 Building Regulations requirements. The projected reduction in in the dwelling emission rate performance of the development is disappointing but officers acknowledge the limitations to the power supply for the development that have been placed on the developer by the electricity network provider which is a matter outside of the developer's control. The Council's Sustainability Officer has advised that this is a known issue and is becoming an increasingly common issue on development sites.
- 6.99 Furthermore, the projected dwelling emission rate performance of the development would still comfortably exceed the minimum 35% improvement required by Policy H5. It should also be noted that the calculations upon which the 85% improvement in the dwelling emission rate that the approved development was projected to be achieve, were based upon very early-stage projections. The design stage of the development is now more advanced and as part of the variation of conditions application, the applicant has submitted

their full design stage SAP calculations for each dwelling for approval by the LPA, and it these calculations upon which the 50.38% improvement in the dwelling emission rate is now projected. Submission and approval of the design stage SAP calculations is required under condition no. 8 of the extant outline permission which requires the development to achieve the minimum 35% improvement required by Policy H5.

- 6.100 The submitted design stage SAP calculations for the development have been independently reviewed on behalf of the LPA by a specialist consultant. The consultant has confirmed to your officers that the submitted SAP calculations have been carried out fully in accordance with industry standard practices and that projected 50.38% improvement in the dwelling emission rate is an accurate design stage performance projection for the development. The consultant also agrees that in their experience, the electricity supply issue which has led to the reduction in the performance of the development is becoming an increasingly common issue on development sites.
- 6.101 Whilst the reduction in the improvement of the dwelling emission rate above the Building Regulations standard is disappointing, officers acknowledge the valid reason for this. In terms of the policy assessment of the revisions to the energy strategy each dwelling would continue to be served by a renewable energy source in either an ASHP or photovoltaic panels or both as required by Policy CC4 (Decentralised Energy Provision). The projected design stage improvement in the dwelling emission rate, which has now been supported by detailed SAP calculations for each dwelling and subject to specialist independent review, would also still comfortably exceed the minimum requirements of Policy H5.
- 6.102 Furthermore, the developer would still be required, as per the extant permission, to off-set the carbon performance of the development to zero by way of a financial contribution to the LPA to be secured as part of the section 106 legal agreement. Given the on-site carbon savings of the development would be reduced this off-setting contribution would consequently now need to be increased to around £334,449 (compared to the £135,000 contribution secured under the extant permission). The applicant has indicated their agreement to this.
- 6.103 On the basis of the above, officers are satisfied that the development still demonstrates compliance with Policies CC4 and H5.
- 6.104 It is proposed that all dwellings that would not be served by an ASHP would be designed in such that they are capable of being adapted should the homeowner wish to install an ASHP at a later date, when sufficient energy supply capacity is available within the network. The dwellings which are proposed to be served by ASHPs are also proposed to form part of the first phase of the development to be built; such that if there has been an unexpected change in the power supply capacity available to the development, then there is the option for ASHP to be re-introduced to the remaining dwellings.



Plan showing location of dwellings to be served by air source heat pumps within the development (red circles)

Pollution and Water Resources

- 6.105 Policy EN15 ‘Air quality’ and EN16 ‘Pollution and Water Resources’ only permit development where mitigation measures can be provided to ensure that developments do not have an adverse effect on air quality; land, noise and light pollution; and water resources.
- 6.106 In order to help improve local air quality when the development is built, the approved outline permission secured provision of a ‘smarter signal’ operating scheme at the Henley Road/Prospect Street/Peppard Road junction as part of the s106 obligations for the development. As set out above, this and all other obligations secured under the extant permission, would continue to apply to the proposed varied development.
- 6.107 Implementation of the approved glazing, ventilation and sound insulation specifications approved under condition no. 24 of existing outline permission would be carried out across and secured as part of the variation proposals. This would ensure future occupiers of the dwellings would not be subject to unacceptable noise or air quality impacts.
- 6.108 As per the approved development construction and demolition phase works will likely have an adverse impact on the nearest noise sensitive receptors even with mitigation in place. This has been assessed as a minor to moderate adverse effect. Therefore, it is necessary for the developer to follow Best Practicable Means to minimise the impact during construction & demolition. A

condition was attached to the extant permission to secure submission and approval of construction method statement prior to commencement of works on site to ensure that that appropriate measures to mitigate the impact of the demolition and construction on the surrounding are secured. This condition would be re-applied should the variation permission be granted.

- 6.110 An application (ref. 230024) for approval of a construction method statement has also been submitted concurrent to this application and is also on the committee agenda for consideration under Item 15.
- 6.111 Conditions no. 25 and 26 of the extant outline permission secured submission and approval of a contaminated land assessment and remediation schemes to ensure the site is suitable for the proposed residential use and that the construction and demolition works can be carried out without adverse impacts on the surrounding environment. Details under both conditions have already been separately approved by officers, in consultation with Environmental Protection colleagues, under application ref. 220958. Should the variation proposals be approved then conditions 25 and 26 would be changes to compliance conditions to require the development to be undertaken in accordance with the approved remediation details.

Archaeology

- 6.112 When the approved development was considered it was established that the site has a moderate potential for archaeological deposits of later prehistoric (Bronze Age - Iron Age) and Romano-British date, a moderate potential for deposits of earlier prehistoric date, and a low potential for deposits of medieval and post-medieval date, with the exception of late post-medieval field boundaries for which the potential is high. Therefore, condition 44 of the outline permission was attached to require a programme of archaeological works to be undertaken, prior to commencement of development, in accordance a written scheme of archaeological investigation (WSI) to be submitted and approved by the LPA.
- 6.113 The LPA approved an application for approval of an archaeological WSI under condition 44 on 4th November 2022 (application ref. 220738) in consultation with Berkshire Archaeology. The condition requires the programme of archaeological works outlined within the WSI to be carried out prior to commencement of the development on site and, if granted, this condition would be re-applied to variation of condition permission. This would ensure the proposals continue to comply with Policy EN2 (Areas of Archaeological Significance) which requires potential archaeological remains to be investigated and recorded.

Community Facilities

Healthcare

- 6.114 As set out in paragraph 6.3 of this report, Policy CA1b does not apply to the development, which refers to provision of on-site infrastructure, including healthcare, but this policy is an indication that additional development of the scale in the allocation, or greater, is expected to need to be supported by improvements in healthcare provision. Following strong indications from the

NHS Clinical Care Commissioning Group that there was no desire for a new or standalone facility in the area in consideration of the original application, a financial contribution of £550,000 towards providing health care facilities at the existing Emmer Green Surgery or elsewhere within the wider area was instead secured as part of the associated section 106 agreement. This contribution would continue to be secured as part of the section 106 obligations should this variation application be granted.

Education

- 6.115 As set out in the Council's Section 106 Obligations Supplementary Planning Document Community Infrastructure Levy money from the varied development would continue to go towards education infrastructure for early years, primary and secondary education. Further details regarding CIL are set out later in this report.

Section 106 Obligations

- 6.116 Policy CC9 'Securing Infrastructure' sets out that proposals for development will not be permitted unless infrastructure, services, resources, amenities or other assets lost or impacted upon as a result of the development or made necessary by the development will be provided through direct provision or financial contributions at the appropriate time. As discussed above there were a number of obligations secured as part of the original outline permission. All obligations would continue to comply to the proposed varied development should permission be granted. The obligations, with any changes required as a result of the proposed variation application, are set out in the recommendation box of this report.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 6.117 In relation to the community infrastructure levy, the applicant has completed a CIL Additional Information Form with the application. Based on the revised 2023 residential CIL rate of £167.06 per square metre, the current broad estimate of the chargeable levy is £3,917,306. However, with provision of on-site affordable housing the applicant could qualify for a reduction to the levy based on the affordable housing floor area being deducted at a later date.

Matters Raised in Representations

- 6.118 Matters raised are considered to have been addressed in the Appraisal section of this report above.

Equalities Impact

- 6.119 When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the proposed development.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The principle of the proposed development was accepted when granting outline permission for application 211843. In overall terms the variations proposed are considered to result in a development which is broadly similar to the approved development subject of the existing outline consent.
- 7.2 The proposed changes in terms of layout of the dwelling and road layout, unit mix, vehicle, cycle parking, SuDS and tree loss/planting are considered to be negligible and would continue to present a suitable, spacious residential layout in compliance with the relevant national and local planning policies as set out in the appraisal section of the report above.
- 7.3 The revised proposals do present a minor overall change in terms of layout and quantum of retained undesignated space, notably as a result of the reduction in land required for SuDS within the development. Notwithstanding this, the revised development layout does provide for an overall small increase in amount of usable public open space and in accordance with Policy EN8, the proposals are considered to have satisfactorily demonstrated that qualitative improvements to the remaining open space would be provided to a level sufficient to out-weigh the loss of open space. As with the approved outline permission, the provision of public access to the remaining open space on what is currently private land is considered to be a significant benefit of the proposed development.
- 7.4 Officers also acknowledge that the proposals do present a reduced commitment in terms of the decentralised energy strategy for the development, with a significant reduction in the number of dwellings to be served by air source heat pumps. However, as detailed in the report above the reasons for this in terms of lack of available capacity within the electricity network are clear and ultimately out of the control of the developer. Notwithstanding this, the proposals would still exceed the Council's minimum standards in terms of improvements in the dwelling emission rate above Building Regulation Standards as required by Policy H5 and, as per the approved development, an increased contribution would be secured to off-set carbon emission of the development to zero.
- 7.6 The revised proposals would continue to be fully policy compliant in terms of affordable housing provision and would make appropriate contributions towards health care provision and recreational facilities within the surrounding area.
- 7.7 All other recommended conditions and section 106 obligations secured as part of the extant outline permission would continue to be secured should the variation permission be granted, including the extensive off-site highway improvements.
- 7.8 When applying an overall critical planning balance of all material considerations officers consider that this weighs in favour of the proposed development and the recommendation is to approve the revised proposals, subject to the recommended conditions and completion of S106 and S278 Agreements as set out in this report.

Case Officer: Mr Matt Burns

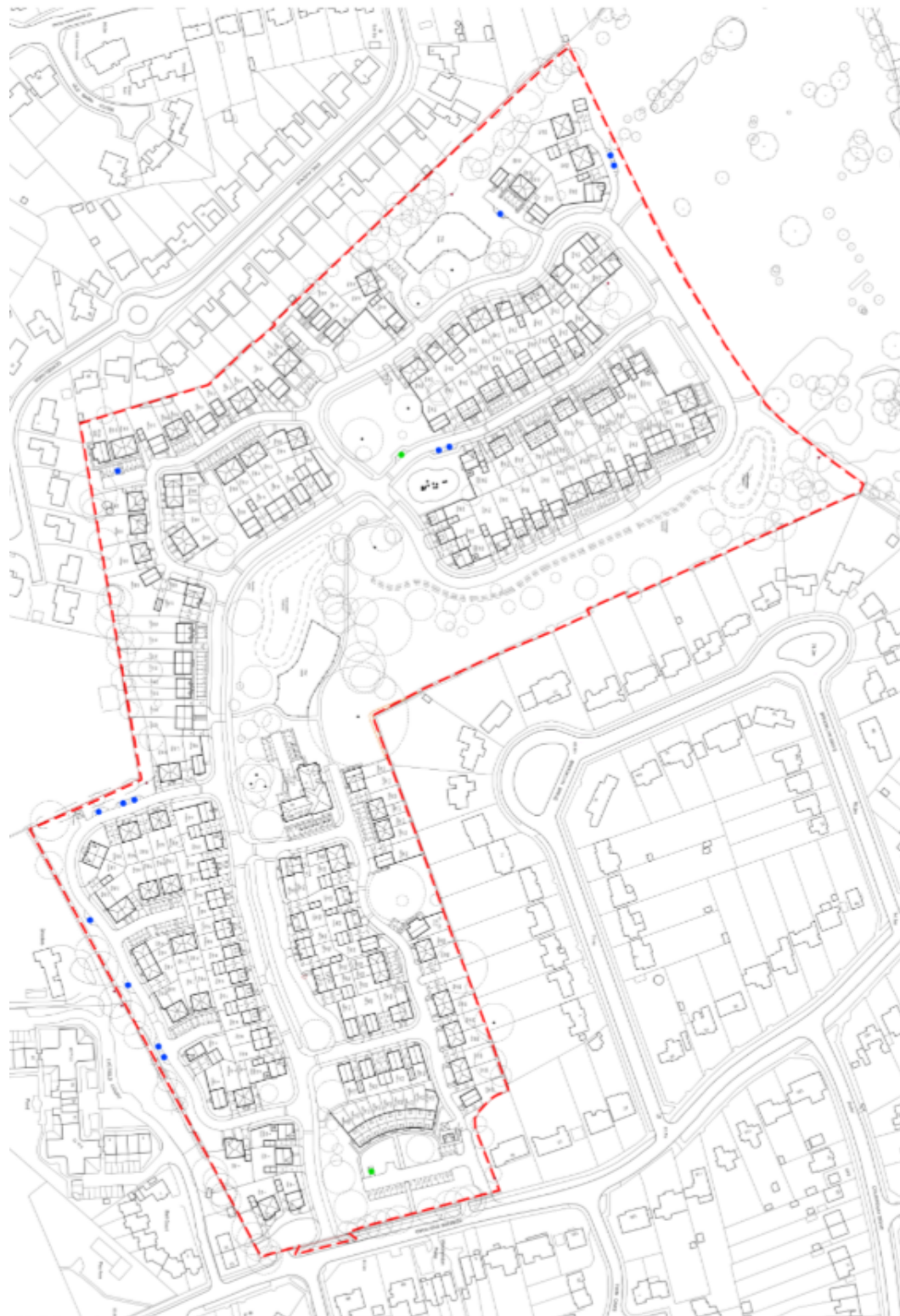
Plans and Drawings:

(Not all plans attached - full plans can be viewed on the Council website using the

application search function:
http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb_PL/welcome.asp)



Proposed Site Layout Plan



Car Parking Plan

1. 1 space per 120 residential units
 2. 2 spaces per 1200 visitor spaces
 3. 2 spaces per 1000 sqm of office space
 4. 2 spaces per 1000 sqm of retail space
 5. 2 spaces per 1000 sqm of other uses

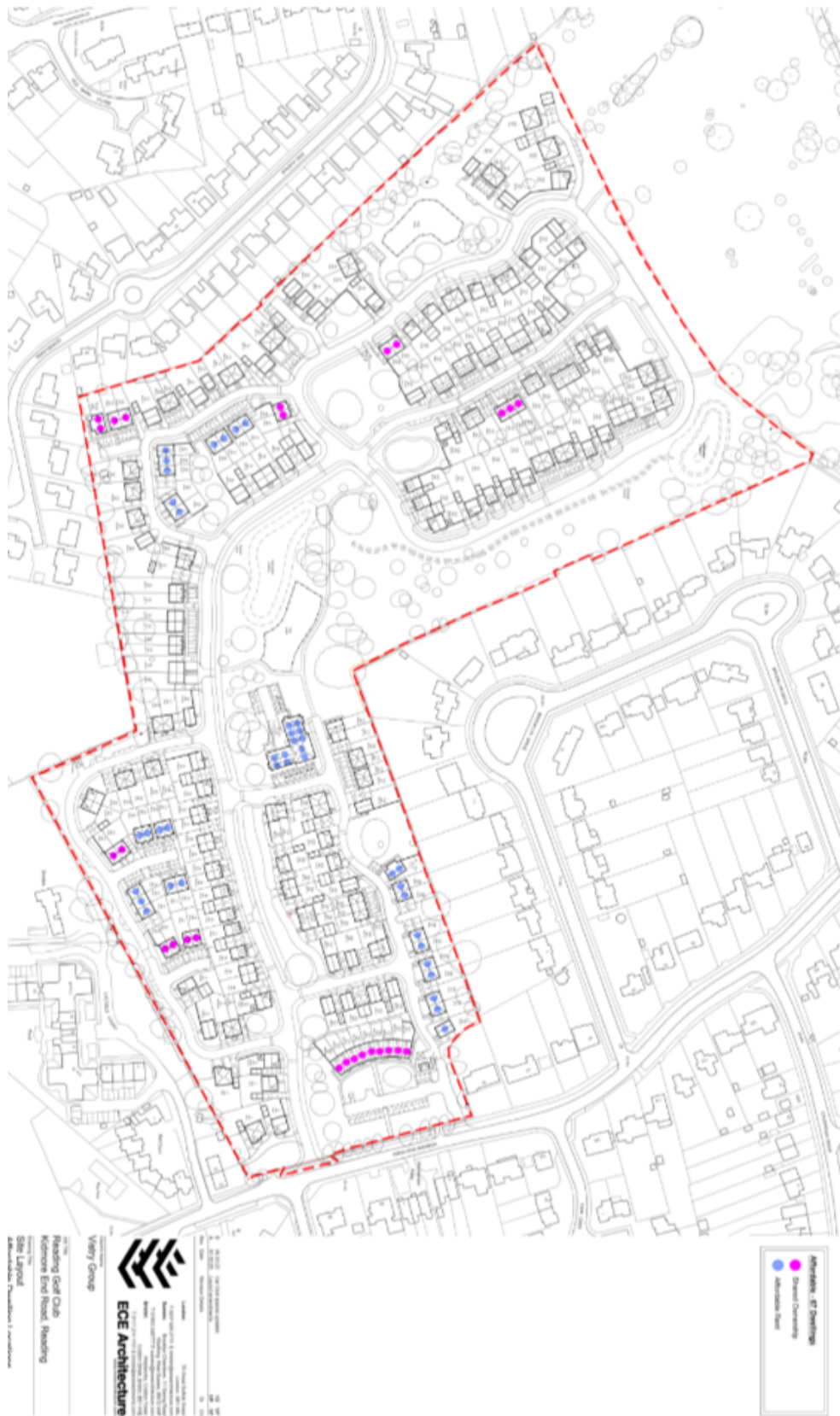
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ECE Architectural
 Varsity Group
 Reading Golf Club
 Kilmore End Road, Reading
 RG2 9AT
 Parking Plan

Proposed Parking Layout Plan



Proposed Open and Green Space Provision Plan



Proposed Affordable Housing Location Plan



Proposed Detailed Site Layout Plan 2 of 3

CDM 2015 Health & Safety Information

Key

- Basin Tanker Road
- Cycle Storage
- Hardstanding
- Native Elm (to be removed)
- Clifford Green Bar
- Native Oak (to be removed)
- Hardstanding Driveway
- Wet Collection Pond (WCP)
- Clutter Gate
- Wall Structure (to be removed)
- EV Plug (to be removed)
- EV Plug (to be added)
- EV No. 12345



10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100
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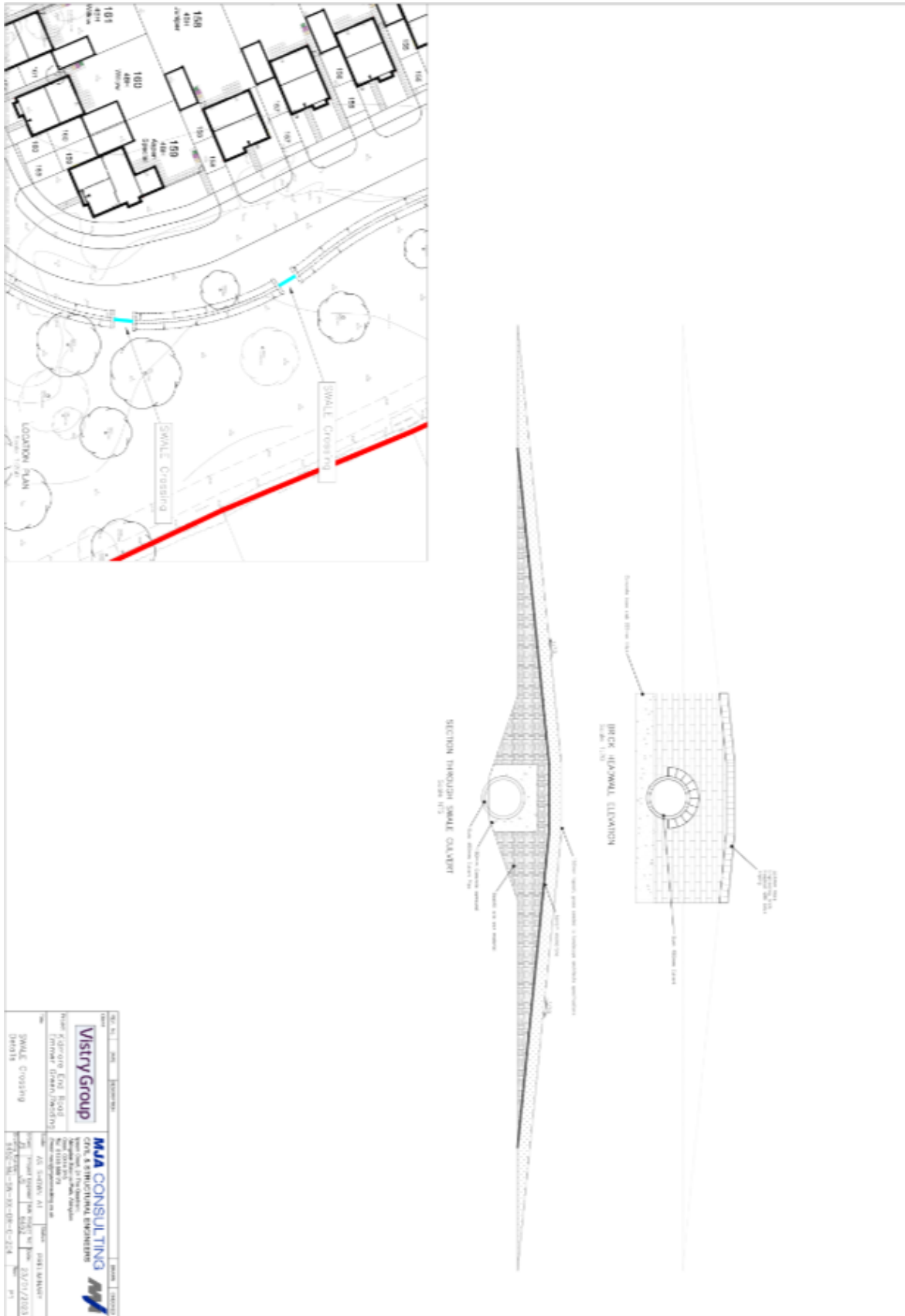
Visby Group

Reading Golf Club
 Reformers Era Hotel, Reading
 Details Site Layout - Sheet 3

Scale: 1:500 @ A1 / 1:1000 @ A3
 Date: 01/10/21
 Author: AC
 Checker: CV



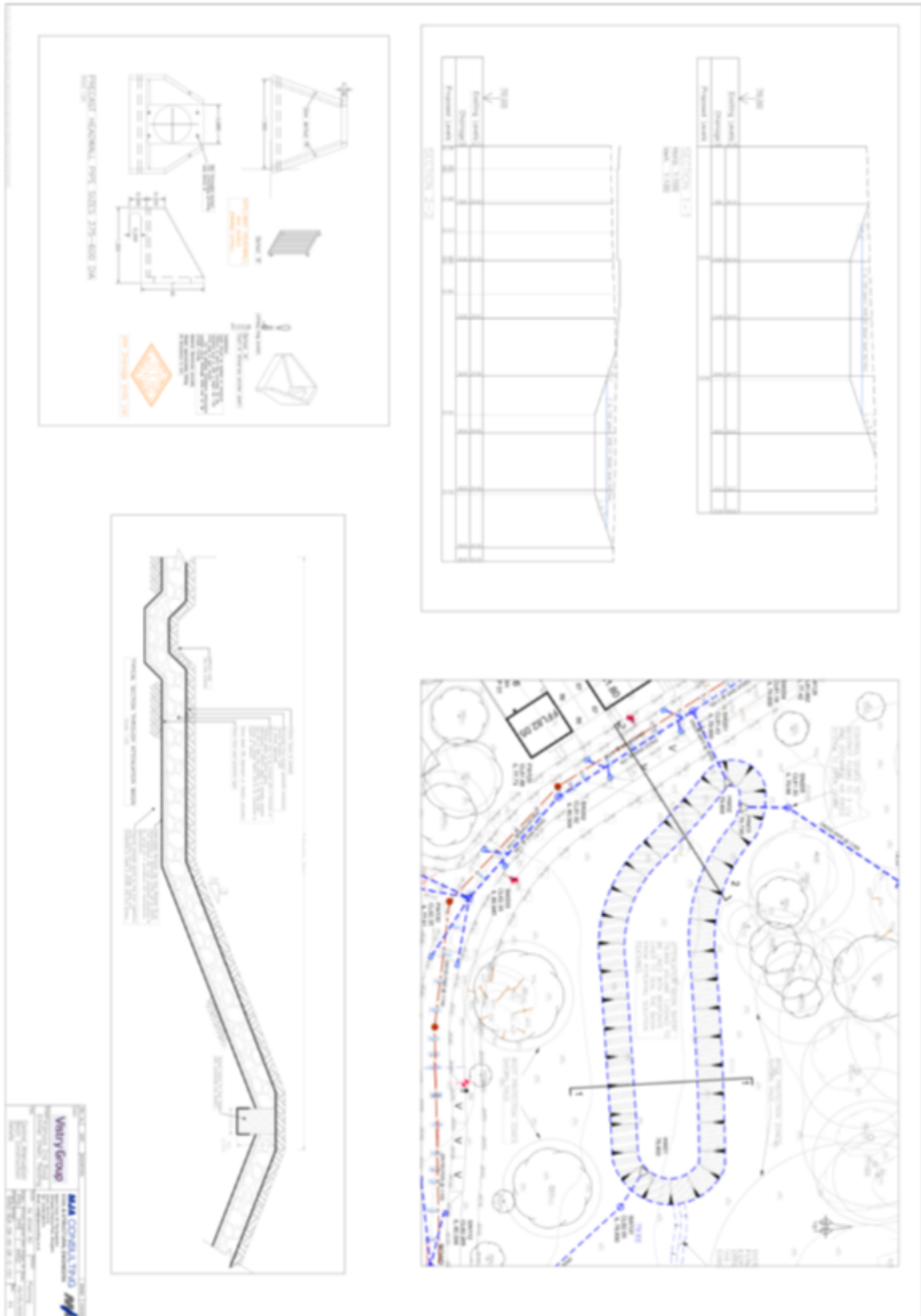
Proposed Detailed Site Layout Plan 3 of 3



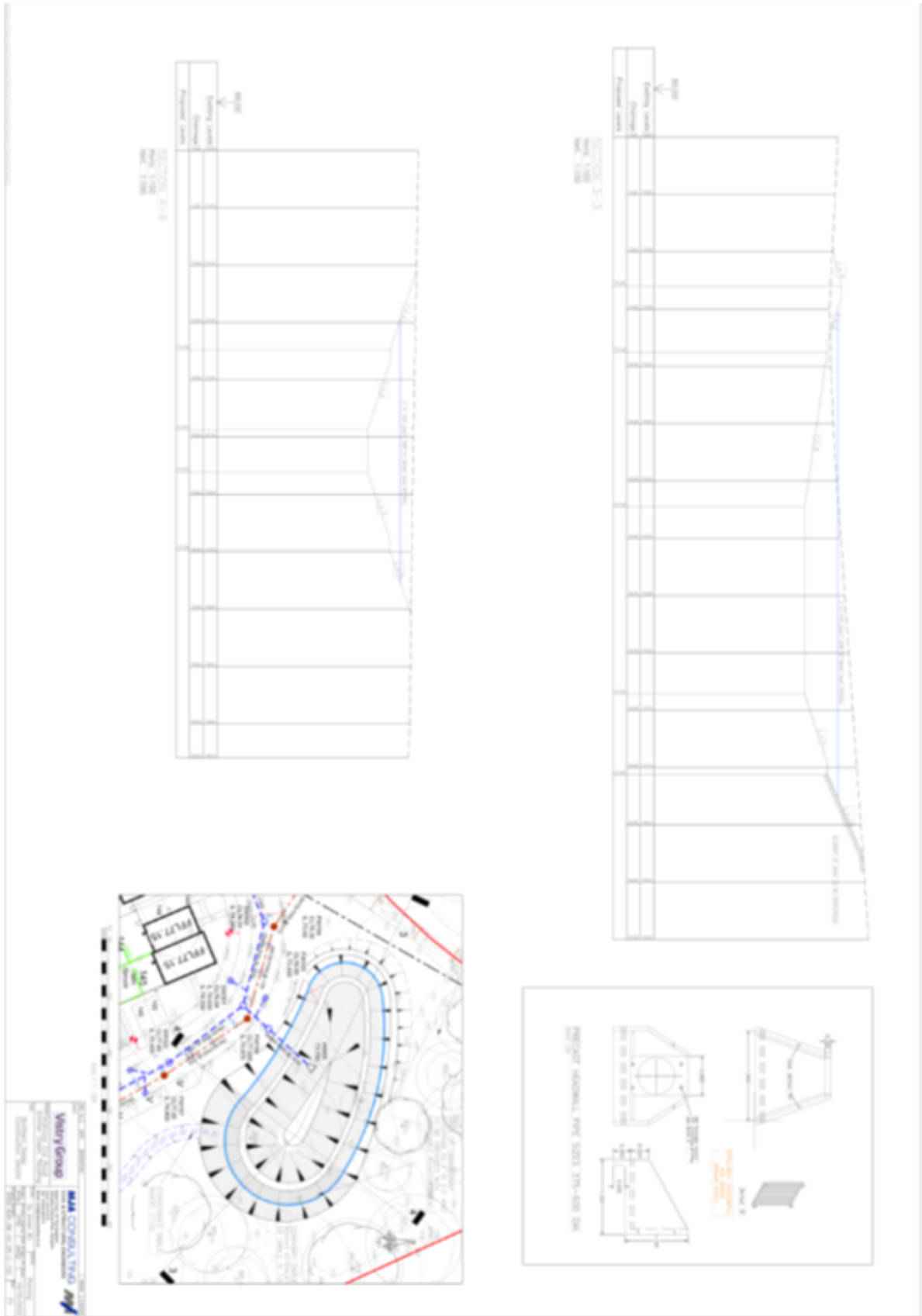
Proposed Swale Crossing Plan



Proposed and Approved Overlay Plan



Proposed Central Attenuation Basin Plan



Proposed Northern Attenuation Basin Plan

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29th March 2023

Ward: Emmer Green

App No: 220930/REM

Address: Reading Golf Club, 17 Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green

Proposal: Application for approval of reserved matters (appearance) submitted pursuant to outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR

Applicant: Vistry Thames Valley

13 Week Target Decision Date: 27/01/2023

RECOMMENDATION:

Subject to the Committee resolving to grant planning permission for associated section 73 variation of conditions application ref. 221312VAR (Item 13 on the agenda):

Delegate to the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services (ADPTPPS) to **GRANT** approval of appearance reserved matters under condition no. 3 of outline planning permission ref. 221312VAR

Conditions to Include:

1. Time limit - standard three years for implementation
2. In accordance with the approved Plans

Informatives:

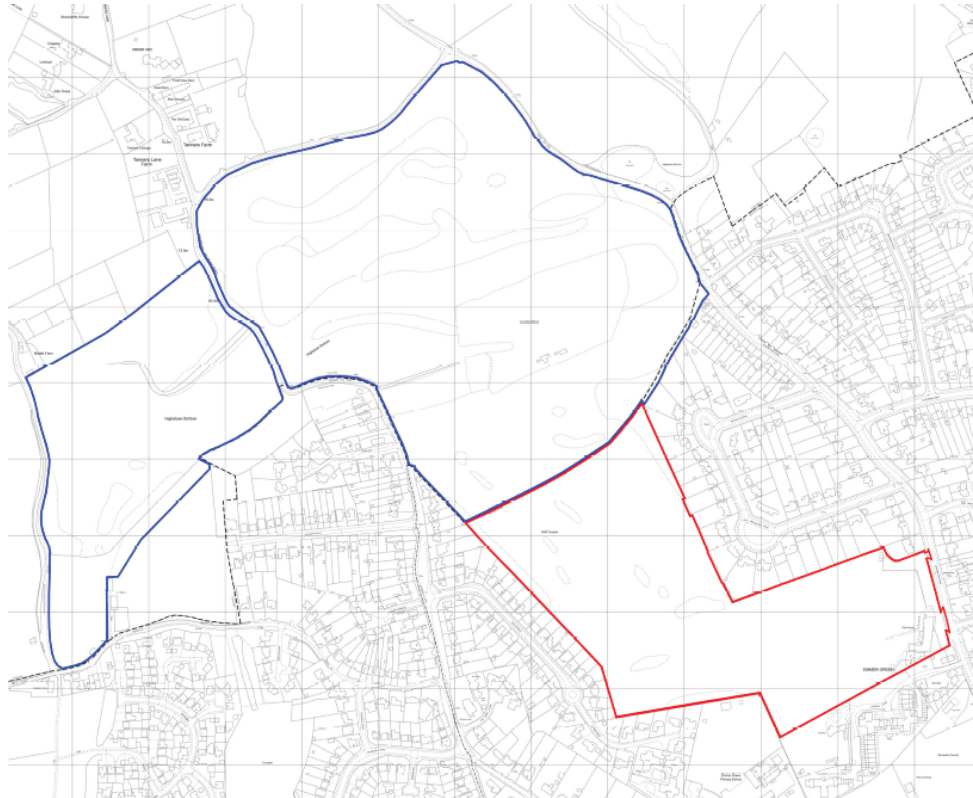
1. The original planning permission 221312VAR still stands and all conditions, informatives and section 106 obligations still apply. This approval and that permission and section 106 should be read together.

Should the Committee resolve to refuse planning permission for associated section 73 variation of conditions application ref. 221312VAR (Item 13 on the agenda):

Delegate to the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services (ADPTPPS) to **INVALIDATE** the application given the planning permission to which the reserved matters approval is sought does not exist.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site, delineated by the red line boundary, is 12.5ha in size and forms part of the former Reading Golf Club playing course.



Location Plan - Red Line Area - Application Site and Land within Reading Borough. Blue Line Area - Land under the Applicant's Control within South Oxfordshire District

- 1.2 Outline Planning Permission ref. 211843 was granted at the site on 31st March 2022, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance only, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential scheme (C3 use) to include affordable housing and public open space at the former Reading Golf Club.
- 1.3 The development granted outline planning permission included:
- 223 residential dwellings including 67 (30%) affordable houses.
 - 442 vehicle parking spaces
 - A development layout set around a central spine road providing access from Kidmore End Road and a series of circular cul de sacs leading off from this central access road.
 - 3.89ha of public open space and 0.74ha of public green space (total 4.63ha)
 - A 0.16ha Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP)
 - Removal of 112 trees and planting of 196 new trees (net gain of 84 trees)
 - SuDS
- 1.4 A concurrent section 73 variation of conditions application (ref. 221312VAR) for amendments to the outline planning permission has also been submitted and together with the reserved matters application is before the Committee for determination on the committee agenda (Item 13). The proposed amendments

sought by the variation application are discussed in detail in the separate officer report under Item 13 but in summary include changes to the dwelling mix, layout and siting changes to every dwelling, changes to the layout and areas of open space, revised vehicle parking plan, including visitor spaces and changes to the SuDS and energy strategy for the development.

- 1.5 The development layout upon which the reserved matters proposals are based is that proposed under the associated section 73 variation of conditions application (ref. 212312) and **not** that upon which the existing outline permission is based. Approval of the reserved matters is therefore reliant upon the section 73 variation of conditions application also being approved.
- 1.6 It should be noted that conditions which secure submission and approval of more specific details and specifications of the appearance of the development, including details of materials, boundary treatment and hard and soft landscaping which are attached to the original outline planning permission (ref. 211843) would be re-applied to the section 73 variation of conditions planning permission should this be granted.
- 1.7 Notwithstanding the above, the principles of the appearance reserved matters that are required to be approved remain but are based upon a revised development layout.

2. PROPOSALS AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 The Appearance details of the development proposed for approval under the reserved matter are outlined under condition no. 3 of outline planning permission ref. 211843 and are as follows:

- Elevations
- Materials
- Floorplans
- Location and extent of all residential amenity areas
- Areas of Open Space
- Street furniture and apparatus

2.2 Submitted Drawings and Documents

- Site Location Plan PL-050 REV A
- Proposed Site Block Plan PL-051 REV C
- Existing Site Plan / Topographical Survey PL-052 REV A
- Site Layout PL-053 REV N
- Presentation Site Layout PL-054 REV I
- Proposed Materials Plan PL-055 REV H
- Proposed Character Plan Area PL-056 REV F
- Parking Plan PL-057 REV G
- Detailed Site Layout Sheet 1 PL-059 REV N
- Detailed Site Layout Sheet 2 PL-060 REV L
- Detailed Site Layout Sheet 3 PL-061 REV L

- Site Layout - Approved Layout Overlay PL-062 REV E
- Green Space Provision Plan PL-063 REV E
- Site Layout - Affordable Dwelling Locations PL-064 REV A
- Site Layout - Open Space Overlay Plan PL-066 REV A
- Cooper - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL110 REV E
- 2B3P01 - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL111 REV D
- Hazel - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL112 REV D
- 3B5P02 - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL113 REV F
- Asher - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL115 REV E
- 3B5P03 - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL116 REV E
- Spruce - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL117 REV D
- Spruce - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL118 REV E
- Spruce - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL119 REV C
- Spruce - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL120 REV D
- Cypress - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL121 REV D
- Cypress - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL122 REV C
- 4B5P01 - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL123 REV E
- 4B5P01 - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL124 REV C
- Speirs - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL125 REV D
- Chestnut - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL126 REV E
- Chestnut - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL127 REV E
- Birch - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL128 REV D
- Birch - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL129 REV D
- Lime - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL130 REV D
- Aspen - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL131 REV D
- Aspen - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL132 REV E
- Aspen - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL133 REV F
- Aspen - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL134 REV D
- Aspen - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL135 REV E
- Aspen - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL136 REV E
- Aspen - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL137 REV E
- Holly - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL138 REV D
- Willow - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL139 REV D
- Willow - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL140 REV D
- Juniper - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL141 REV E
- Beech - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL142 REV H
- 4B7P01 - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL143 REV E
- 5B8P01 - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL144 REV G
- Lutyens - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL145 REV F
- SH101 - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL146 REV D
- Allum - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL147 REV F
- Blackthorn - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL148 REV E
- Flanders - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL149 REV D
- Atkins - Proposed Plans and Elevations L150 REV D
- Crescent - Proposed Plans PL152 REV G
- Crescent - Proposed Elevations PL153 REV H
- Garages - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL154 REV C
- Apartment Block Proposed Floor Plans PL155 REV C
- Apartment Block Proposed Elevations and Sections PL156 REV B

- Sub Station and Cycle Store PL157
- Hazel - Proposed Plans and Elevations PL158
- Proposed Street Scenes PL180 REV F
- Proposed Street Scenes PL181 REV G
- Proposed Street Scenes PL182 REV C
- Proposed Street Scenes PL183 REV C
- Proposed Street Scenes PL184 REV C
- Proposed Street Scenes PL185 REV C
- Proposed Street Scenes PL186 REV C
- Proposed Street Scenes PL187 REV D
- Proposed Site Sections PL188 REV A
- 3D Visual - View 1 PL190 REV A
- 3D Visual - View 2 PL191 REV A
- 3D Visual - View 3 PL192 REV A
- Design and Access Statement / Additional Design Amendments, prepared by ECE Architecture REV G Jan-23
- Landscape Master Plan VYH23781 10D

3. PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 161871: Re-pollard 2 lime trees (T1 and T2). Granted on 11th October 2016.
- 3.2 181992: Cut back one oak overhanging 3 Gorselands from the Golf Course to give 6.5m clearance from property. Granted on 9th January 2019.
- 3.3 200229: Request for an EIA Scoping Opinion in accordance with Regulation 15 (2) of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017 (as amended) with regard to the proposed development at Reading Golf Course to develop a scheme for a mixed-use residential led development to incorporate up to 275 new homes; medical space; associated open space and landscaping; vehicle parking, pedestrian, cycle and vehicular accesses, associated highway works; and associated infrastructure. Advice provided between April and May 2020.
- 3.4 200713: Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential-led scheme (C3 use to include affordable housing) and the provision of community infrastructure at Reading Golf Club. This scheme was based on a development of 260 dwellings. Withdrawn on 25th November 2020.
- 3.5 211843: Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential scheme (C3 use to include affordable housing) and public open space at the former Reading Golf Club. Granted on 31st March 2022 (linked to a S106).
- 3.6 220738: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 19 (Habitat Enhancement Scheme), 20 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) and 44 (Archaeology) of planning permission ref. 211843. Split Decision on 4th

November 2022 (details under condition 44 approved but details under condition 19 and 20 not approved)

- 3.7 220958: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 25, 26 (Contamination) and 29 (Construction Method Statement) of planning permission ref. 211843. Split Decision on 4th January 2023 (details under conditions 25 and 26 approved but details under condition 29 not approved)
- 3.8 220960: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 21 (External Lighting) 35 (Refuse) and 39 (Vehicle Parking) of planning permission ref. 211843. Withdrawn on 30th August 2022
- 3.9 221312: Outline planning application with matters reserved in respect of Appearance for demolition of clubhouse and erection of a new residential scheme (c3 use) including affordable housing and public open space at former reading golf club without complying with conditions 5 (Plans), 8&9 (Emissions) 10&11 (SuDS), 12 (Levels), 13 (Mix), 17 (AMS), 19 (Habitat Enhancement), 20 (CEMP), 22 (Biodiversity), 25&26 (Contamination), 29 (CMS), 34 (Cycle Parking), 35 (Refuse), 39 (Car Parking), 41 (Traffic Calming) & 44 (Archaeology) of outline permission 211843 for amendments including changes to layout, mix, parking, drainage, landscaping, open space and energy. Under Consideration
- 3.10 221713: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 47 (water infrastructure phasing plan) and 48 (water network upgrades) of outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration
- 3.11 221762: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 6 (Phasing) of planning permission ref. 211843. Under Consideration
- 3.12 221764: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 7 (Materials) of outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration
- 3.13 221765: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 21 (external lighting scheme) of outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration
- 3.14 230024: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 29 (Construction Method Statement) of planning permission ref. 211843. Under Consideration
- 3.15 230073: Application for Approval of details reserved by condition 14 (hard and soft landscaping) of planning permission ref. 211843. Under Consideration

4. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Transport

- 4.1 No objections.

RBC Environmental Protection

4.2 No objections.

RBC Planning Natural Environment Team (Trees)

4.3 No comments - submission and approval of detailed hard and soft landscaping for the development would continue to be secured under condition 14 of the outline planning permission.

RBC Ecological Consultant

4.4 No comments.

Environment Agency

4.5 No comments.

Sport England

4.6 No comments.

Historic England

4.7 No comments.

Natural England

4.8 No comments

South Oxfordshire District Council

4.9 No comments received.

Oxfordshire County Council

4.10 No comments received.

Reading Design Review Panel (DRP)

4.11 Summary of comments from June 2022 DRP review:

- The Panel considered that the general 'grain' of the development balances the need to achieve a viable density with the provision of appropriately sized family plots and shared landscaped spaces, which will benefit the residents of this development and the wider area
- The applicant is pursuing the use of 'standard house types' and a standard material palette. If this can be done whilst meeting RBC's current sustainability targets the Panel does not object to this in principle. Some of the examples shown are a little awkward in their

proportions, particularly where a third storey of accommodation is maximised - wall vs. roof vs. window - probably driven by eaves position - are not well balanced.

- The approach of applying different materials in the different parts of the site could help with hierarchy and legibility, currently though it is too diverse. A simplification is required and much more rigour needs to be applied.

4.12 Summary of comments from December 2022 DRP review:

- Changes to materials around corners are successful and read nicely within wider setting
- Unsure about the introduction of barn hipped roofs has had desired effect; hips don't add to the coherence of the street-scene. Ridge heights are high which contributes to roofs feeling heavy.
- Proportion of the dormers are odd in relation to the windows below and don't necessarily follow an emphasis of design; there may be an opportunity to solve the roof issue by introducing gables. The traditional approach is for house proportions to decrease as you go up the building and smaller windows as you go up; the proposed is reversed.
- Roof pitches to garages should be parallel to the roof pitch of the host dwellings.
- The crescent terraces to 'The Frontage' character area look squashed at ground floor level; height of render needs to be reviewed as well as proportions of windows; design of the door doesn't work with the small windows at the top of the door; a lot of space between the first-floor windowsill and the brick band below.

Public Consultation

4.13 Site notices were erected at 5 locations surrounding the site on 27th October 2022. Adjoining occupiers were formally consulted by letter - this consultation period ceased on 6th December 2022. Seven letters of objection have been received and are summarised below:

- The site is premium high-quality land in a beautiful setting and therefore the proposed houses should reflect similar quality but what is proposed is a standard housing development without interest or character contrary to Policy CC7.
- The areas surrounding the site consist of individual designed houses and the proposals do nothing to enhance this character.
- The proposed gardens are small compared to existing surrounding properties resulting in the proposals appearing crowded and cramped.
- Some proposed houses sit side on to existing surrounding houses
- Tree planting should be proposed around the periphery of the site.
- There should have been public consultation on the proposals with local residents

4.14 Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA)

- The existing site is of high quality and much valued in its present form. To offset its loss to a development that is not welcomed by the community CADRA believe that the Applicant should strive to provide something remarkable in design terms, being outstanding in both layout and individual house design. The current proposal in the submitted scheme falls well short of this aspiration and CADRA's views were communicated to Vistry at a meeting with them on 2nd November 2022. The proposals do not fully meet the expectations of Policy CC7.
- The layout is unimaginative but is determined by the original permission and presumably unfortunately fixed. The Applicant has made some cosmetic changes to house designs, but they remain the standard, pedestrian house types one would see on any such development anywhere in the country. There is a lack of architectural flair or distinction. A site of this calibre should justify commissioning one-off innovative designs rather than applying the developer's standard products. The proposed choice of style and materials pays no regard to the setting, either in relation to Reading building styles to the south (e.g., polychrome brickwork) or to the Chilterns to the north (e.g., occasional use of flint with brick quoins etc).
- To be worthy of this very special site, the proposals need to be re-thought to create a unique development. CADRA believe more inspiration can be drawn from the Chilterns Buildings Design Guide.

4.15 Keep Emmer Green (KEG)

- Section 4.1.31 of document [local plan Policy] CC7 states that the development should 'actively improve the area wherever possible'. Section 4.1.33 states that 'The Borough contains many established attractive areas which are highly valued by residents, and which are worthy of protection from damaging and insensitive new development'.
- Emmer Green is an attractive and desirable area. The proposals do nothing to contribute or enhance the character of the area. The proposals are based upon standard, off the shelf designs, and, without exception, are devoid of imagination and will therefore stand out in the area for all the wrong reasons.
- The layout proposed has plots 63 - 64 where the sides of houses are side on to existing properties in Gorselands. Plots 67, 68, 69 & 70 all back on to just one property in Eric Avenue. Plot 93 is side on to Eric Avenue. Many other proposed houses have gardens which are very small and again not in keeping with the properties surrounding the site.
- More trees should be planted around the perimeter of the development. Some gardens are 'back-to-back' with existing properties which is undesirable. Trees planted at the bottom of those gardens and also into the buffer areas between existing properties would enhance the development considerably.

- For the above reasons we consider that the proposed designs are a very poor use of premium quality land and should be rejected.

5 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 “Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development”.
- 5.2 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) states that the reserved matters relating to the ‘Appearance’ of a development are:
- The aspects of a building or place within the development which determine the visual impression the building or place makes, including the external built form of the development, its architecture, materials, decoration, lighting, colour and texture (Paragraph: 006 Reference ID: 14-006-20140306).

National Policy

- 5.3 National Planning Policy Framework (2021). The following chapters are the most relevant (others apply to a lesser extent):
2. Achieving sustainable development
 4. Decision-making
 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
 9. Promoting sustainable transport
 11. Making effective use of land
 12. Achieving well-designed places
 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Local Policy

- 5.4 Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

The relevant policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm

- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN2: Areas of Archaeological Significance
- EN7: Local Green Space and Public Open Space
- EN8: Undesignated Open Space
- EN9: Provision of Open Space
- EN10: Access to Open Space
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN13: Major Landscape Feature
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- H5: Standards for New Housing
- H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

CA1b: Sites for Development in Caversham and Emmer Green:

CA1b PART OF READING GOLF COURSE, KIDMORE END ROAD

Development for residential and replacement clubhouse, subject to the future provision of golf on the remainder of the Golf Club site, which fulfils an important sports and leisure function for Reading, being secured. On-site facilities should be provided to mitigate impacts on community infrastructure, including for healthcare. On-site public open space will be provided.

Development should:

- *Avoid adverse effects on important trees including those protected by TPO;*
- *Provide a green link across the site from Kidmore End Road to the remainder of the golf course, rich in plant species and habitat opportunities;*
- *Ensure that vehicular access is provided from suitable roads to the area to be retained for golf;*
- *Take measures to mitigate impacts on the highway network, particularly on Kidmore End Road and Tanners Lane;*
- *Include all parking requirements within the site to avoid exacerbating parking issues on existing streets;*
- *Take account of potential archaeological significance; and*
- *Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water, and make provision for upgrades where required.*

Site size: 3.75 ha 90-130 dwellings, community provision including healthcare and replacement clubhouse



5.5 Relevant Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) are:

- Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
- Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

5.6 Other relevant documents include:

- Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)
- Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)
- Reading Open Space Strategy Update Note (2018)
- Reading Open Space Strategy (2007)
- The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017
- National Design Guide
- National Design Codes
- The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (Amended 2015)
- Berkshire (including South Bucks) Strategic Housing Market Assessment
- BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight - A guide to good practice, 2nd edition (2011)
- DCLG Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard (2015)
- Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)
- Natural Environment and Rural Communities (NERC) Act 2006
- Local Transport Note 1/20 Cycle Infrastructure Design dated July 2020 (Department for Transport)
- Manual For Streets 2007 (Department for Transport)
- CD 195 - Designing for cycle traffic (Standards for Highways 2020)
- Local Cycling and Walking Improvement Plan 2020-2030 (LCWIP) (November 2019)
- The Reading Climate Change Partnership's (RCCP) Reading Climate Emergency Strategy 2020-25 (November 2020)

5.6 To set the site in the context of the adjoining land this portion of the Reading Golf Course land ownership contains designations with the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035. As set out in the plan extracts below designations include an Area of Ancient Woodland (known as Cucumber Wood) and Conservation Target Areas. The application site is also set approximately 1km from the edge of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).



Extract from South Oxford Local Plan Proposals Map and key



6 APPRAISAL

- 6.1 The principle of the residential development on the site is established by the grant of outline planning permission ref. 211843. The purpose of this application is to seek approval of those reserved matters where details were not provided at outline stage which in this case just relates to the matter of the Appearance of the development. Therefore, it is only matters of Appearance which are subject to consideration in this report.
- 6.2 Whilst Appearance matters were not considered when outline planning permission was granted, the outline application did set out some basic high-level principles upon which the Appearance of the development would be based. These principles referred to a traditional ‘Arts and Crafts’ movement style, utilising a variety of shades of multi-red brick, red, grey and brown roof tiles. It also set out that houses within the development would have individual front and rear gardens, whilst the small number of flats would have access to communal open spaces within the development.

Appearance

- 6.3 The application site is surrounded by existing residential housing to the north, east and southern boundaries. Beyond the western boundary of the site is the remainder of the golf course land, within South Oxfordshire, with the boundary of the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and areas of Ancient Woodland, set between 1km and 2km to the North. There are a series of Listed Buildings scattered throughout the wider townscape. Old Grove House (Grade II*) and The Barn (Grade II) at Highdown Hill Road are the closest to the Site but are located over 125m from the application site. Surley Row Conservation Area is located over 400m from the application site.
- 6.4 When outline planning permission was granted, the application was supported by a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) as required by Policy EN13 that assesses the setting of the development on the AONB and surrounding land south and south-east of the AONB boundary which the Chilterns Conservation Board (CCB) advised falls within the wider setting of the AONB and that much of this landscape would justify the status of a 'valued landscape', consistent with the guidance in the NPPF paragraph 174.
- 6.5 It is considered worthwhile reiterating the conclusions reached in assessing the visual impact of the development on local area and wider landscape when outline permission was granted. In this respect it was concluded that:
- If the application site was considered to form part of the wider setting of the AONB and wider valued landscape area then the overall impact on these areas would be negligible, notably given the distance and topography between the site and the edge of the AONB.
 - The layout of the dwellings and landscaping to the northern boundary of the site was also considered to create a soft buffer and transition to the remainder of the former golf course land to the north
 - The scale of the dwellings across the site at predominantly two to two and a half storeys, as well as the increase in overall level of tree planting and quantum of open space provision was also considered to contribute towards an appropriate form of development in the context of surrounding residential character.
 - The development would infill the parcel of former golf course land that is surrounded by established residential streets to three of its boundaries and that the extent of development proposed was not considered to appear out of context with the character of edge of settlement residential areas in this part of Caversham.
 - The development would not project beyond the general edge of settlement line of this part of Caversham closer to the AONB.
 - The development would not materially impact on the setting of the closest listed buildings or Surley Row Conservation Area given separations distances.

6.6 The Appearance details of the development that require reserved matters approval are outlined under condition no. 3 of outline planning permission ref. 211843 and are as follows:

- Elevations
- Materials
- Floorplans
- Location and extent of all residential amenity areas
- Areas of Open Space
- Street furniture and apparatus

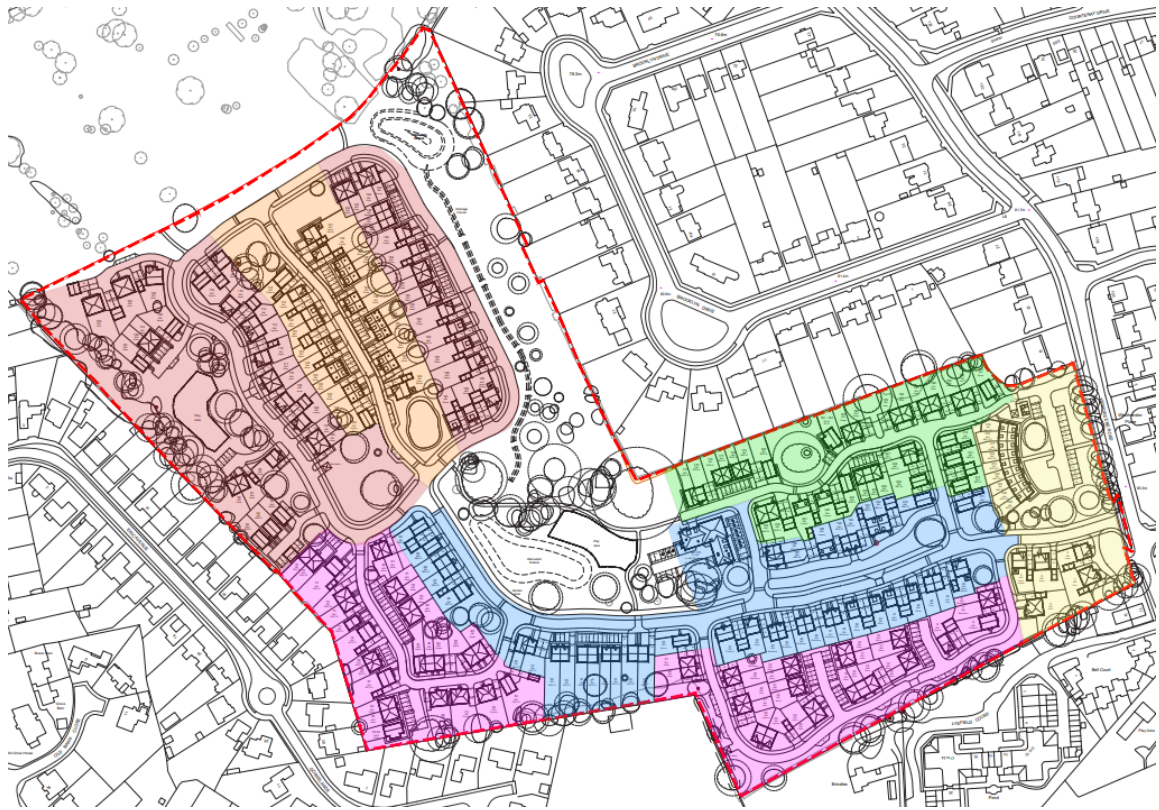
Elevations and Materials

6.7 The supporting documents submitted with the application, include a local character analysis of the existing built development surrounding the site and in the local area. This identifies an overarching traditional vernacular and palette of materials, but that there is not a predominant specific style of dwelling found, with architectural approach and use of materials differing from area to area.

6.8 The mix of materials present within the surrounding area chiefly consists of different tones of red brick which in itself is synonymous with Reading. There are also examples of white render (such as on Kidmore End Road and Eric Avenue), tile-hanging (such as on Gorselands and Jefferson Close) and weatherboarding (such as on Eric Avenue) which are generally used in combination with red brick. Roof materials are predominantly red, grey or black tiles.

6.9 The level of architectural detailing found within the local area also varies significantly both from area to area but with variations also found along individual streets. Notably architecture and use of materials varies significantly within Brooklyn Drive, Eric Avenue and Kidmore End Road which are the roads which run parallel to the north, east and south of the application site. Roof forms include gables, hips, barn hips (half-hips) in a range of pitches whilst dormer roof projections are also common whilst architectural details also vary in terms of window proportions and type, windowsills and headers, presence of brick detailing and porches.

6.10 The proposed Appearance details for the development are based around 6 different character areas within the development, which each take their cues from different aspects of the character of the existing development that surrounds the application site. The character areas are summarised in the coloured shaded areas on the following plan:

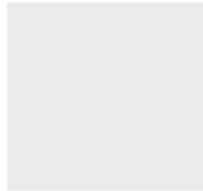
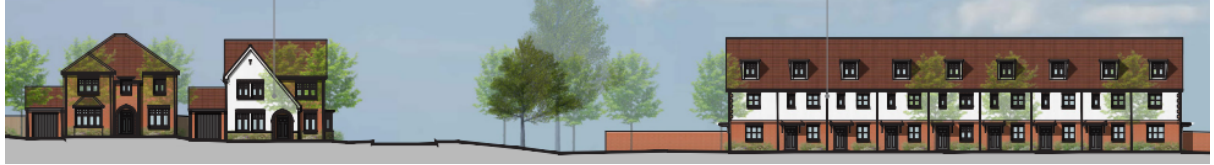


HOUSETYPE DETAILING

<p>The Frontage Brick Type 1 Render Splayed Brick Headers & Cills Quoins Brick Plinth Black Front Doors Brown Roof Tiles</p>	<p>Oak Brick Type 4 Triple Brick Banding 450mm Brick Plinth Splayed Brick Headers & Cills Triple Brick Projecting Band Detail to Match Brick Black Front Doors Grey/Brown Roof Tiles</p>
<p>Spine Brick Type 2 Tile Hung Leaded Cills to Tile Hung Dwellings Arched Brick Headers & Brick Cills Black Front Doors Brown/Red Roof Tiles</p>	<p>The Glade Brick Type 5 Black Weatherboarding Splayed Brick Headers & Cills 450m Brick Plinth Sage Green Front Doors Grey/Red Roof Tiles</p>
<p>The Cottages Brick Type 3 Splayed Brick Headers Double Brick Band Detail in Staffordshire Blue Brick band through Cills Navy Blue Front Doors Grey Roof Tiles</p>	<p>The Street Brick Type 6 Render Stone Headers & Cills to Brick dwellings 450mm Brick Plinth Black Front Doors Brown Roof Tiles</p>

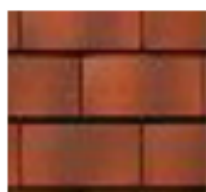
The Frontage

Example Street Scene, visual materials and local character precedent



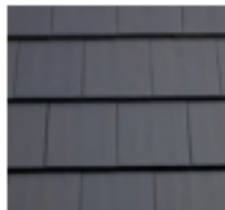
The Spine

Example street-scene, materials and local character precedent



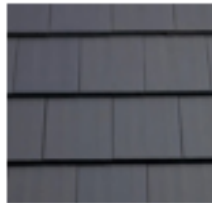
The Cottages

Example Street Scene, visual, materials and local character precedent



The Oak

Example Street Scene, materials and local character precedent



The Glade

Example Street Scene, visual, materials and local character precedent



The Street

Example street-scene, materials and local character precedent



6.10 As shown by the elevational treatment and materials detail principles for each of the character areas above, the proposed approach is based upon a simplified, traditional Arts and Crafts style dwelling design. As a general approach officers consider this to be sound and, as discussed above, in keeping with the overarching character of built form surrounding and nearby the application site.

6.11 Whilst the proposals are, overall, traditional in design approach, officers consider that there is still a significant degree of variation in the individual architectural styles that are found within each of the different character areas as well as more subtle variations found within each of the individual character areas themselves. This approach is considered to provide for a visually varied and interesting development and one which reflects the mix and character of property styles which are characteristic of local area. A total of 28 different house styles are spread throughout the character areas and development as a whole:

Residential Accommodation Schedule

Open Market - 156 Dwellings

- 3no. 2-Bed Bungalow - Flanders
- 13no. 2-Bed Houses - Blackthorn
- 20no. 2-Bed Houses - 2B3P 01
- 5no. 2-Bed Houses - Holly
- 13no. 3-Bed Houses - Beech
- 5no. 3-Bed Houses - 3B5P 03
- 7no. 3-Bed Houses - Cypress
- 12no. 3-Bed Houses - 3B5P 02
- 15no. 3-Bed Houses - Hazel
- 5no. 3-Bed Houses - Spruce
- 6no. 4-Bed Houses - Aspen
- 5no. 4-Bed Houses - Aspen Special
- 3no. 4-Bed Houses - Chestnut
- 6no. 4-Bed Houses - Juniper
- 13no. 4-Bed Houses - 4B5P 01
- 4no. 4-Bed Houses - 4B7P 01
- 11no. 4-Bed Houses - Willow
- 3no. 5-Bed Houses - Lutyens
- 3no. 5-Bed Houses - Birch
- 2no. 5-Bed Houses - Lime
- 2no. 5-Bed Houses - 5B8P 01

Affordable - 67 Dwellings

- Shared Ownership
- Affordable Rent

- 4no. 1-Bed Houses - SH101
- 2no. 1-Bed Apartments
- 4no. 1-Bed Wheelchair Apartments
- 2no. 2-Bed Apartments
- 4no. 2-Bed Wheelchair Apartments
- 10no. 2-Bed House - Atkins
- 4no. 2-Bed House - Cooper
- 17no. 3-Bed House - Asher
- 3no. 4-Bed House - Allum
- 8no. 4-Bed House - Spiers
- 9no. 4-Bed Special Townhouse

Total 223 Dwellings

6.12 The affordable housing units referred to above are spread throughout the development within all the different character areas. Their locations are shown on the plan below:

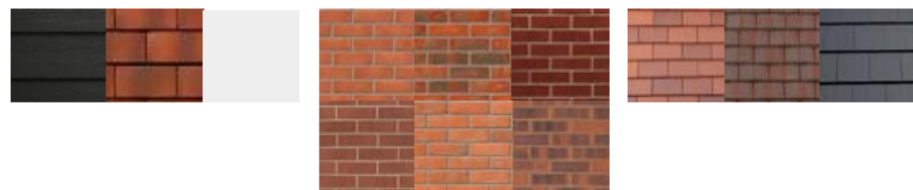


- 6.12 The development contains a single block of twelve flats located centrally within the site within ‘The Spine’ character area. The design approach and use of materials to this building is reflective of the houses within the character area and utilises red brick and hanging tiles to elevations within hipped tile roofs with modest dormers to provide the third-floor accommodation. Juliet balconies are proposed to the west elevation overlooking the central park and garden area of the development.



Proposed West Elevation of the Block of Flats within the Development

- 6.13 As can be seen in the character area summaries set out above, there are consistencies across the site in terms of dwelling design and use of materials, notably all properties incorporate large portions of brick, where an additional material is used in combination with brick (such as render or tile hanging) this is consistently applied to a half height level. All dwellings also incorporate black uPVC rainwater goods, whilst boundary treatments are all a mix of brick walls and timber fencing across the site.
- 6.14 Notwithstanding the broad similarities of the proposed dwelling design set out above, there are variations within the consistent material options including 6 different tones of red brick across the development three different roof tiles colours (red, brown and grey) and alternate half height cladding materials in red hanging tile, white render and black weatherboarding.



CLADDING

BRICK

TILES

Examples of Variation in Materials

- 6.15 In addition to variations in materials there are also more detailed and subtle variations in the dwelling design both between and within the individual character areas. Most notably this includes variation in roof forms with both gable and hipped roofs of varying pitches proposed throughout the development with some dwellings also including modest flat roof dormer roof projections where roof space accommodation is to be provided. There are also varieties of proportions of windows proposed and different combinations of window bar arrangements (all windows are proposed in white uPVC). Window proportions

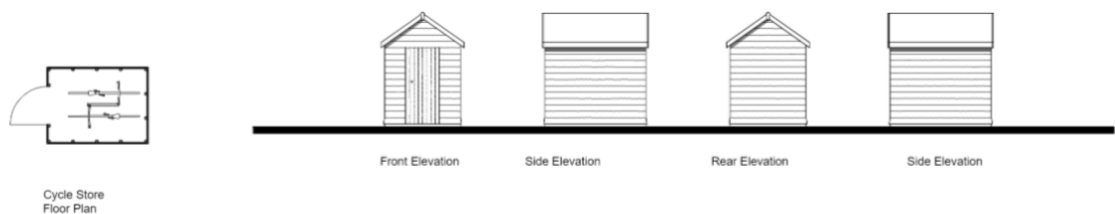
generally reduce from ground to upper floor levels to provided appropriate balance and proportionality to the dwellings.

- 6.16 Brick banding and detailing also varies across all dwellings and includes brick ‘plinths’ to the base of some dwellings, a mix of single, double and triple brick flat and projecting string line brick courses. Where brick banding is proposed this is either in matching brick tone to the dwelling itself or in a contrasting dark blue/grey tone brick. Windowsills and headers treatments are also varied and include a mixture of stone and brick detailing whilst in some instances the dwelling design does not include either a sill or header detail or in some cases the design includes neither. Brick window header details include a mix of splayed and arched detail finishing. Quoin brick detailing is also proposed to the corner of the crescent building within the Frontage character area. Whilst there are 28 different core dwelling types, the use of different material and architectural detailing combinations and handed layouts means that even within each dwelling type there are subtle variations in appearance.
- 6.17 Further variation is also proposed across the development in the use of porches with pitched, hip and flat entrance porches proposed. There is also variation in front and garage door colours with a mix of green, blue and black doors proposed.



Proposed Detailing Variation

- 6.18 Cycle parking is provided within garages or within a lockable external timber shed located in private rear gardens. Apartment blocks have shared communal stores. Electric vehicle charging would be provided to each dwelling via either wall mounted or free-standing charging points.



Timber shed cycle storage for dwellings

- 6.19 The reserved matter proposals have been subject to review by the Reading Design Review Panel (DRP) on two occasions. As a result of the advice received

at the panel reviews, a variety of changes have been made to the design of a number of the proposed dwellings. The changes made include:

- Removal of barn hip roof forms from the proposed development following concern raised that the barn hips resulted in a lack of coherence with other roof styles within the development.
- Raising of eaves heights and lowering of ridge heights to bring overall dwelling heights down and to create a more balanced appearance to the dwellings, with building proportions decreasing moving up the buildings.
- Reduction in size of dormer roof projection to reduce 'top heavy' appearance to some dwellings.
- Dormer positions amended to align and run through with window position to lower floors.

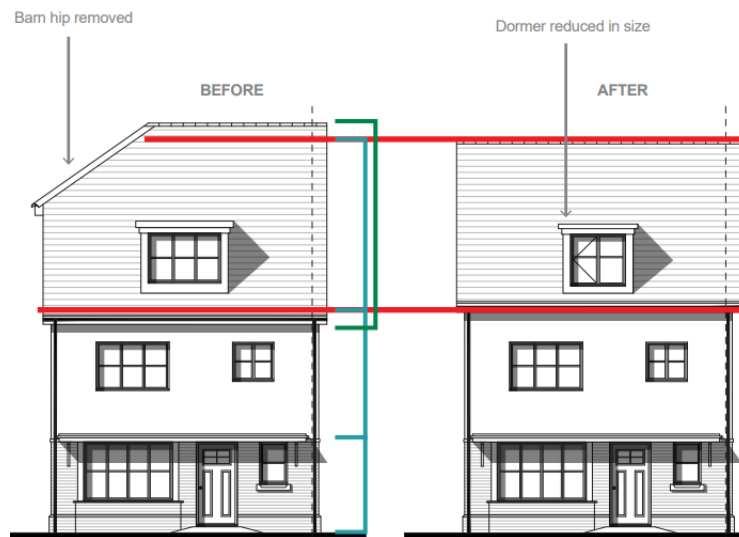
Example before and after street-scene following DRP review (plots 118-128)



Before



After



The proportions of the building have significantly improved. The roofs proportions have decreased which makes the building less heavy.

Before and After DRP review changes to roof form individual dwelling example



Example drawing showing changes to dormer position

- Significant alterations to the Crescent building located with 'The Frontage' character area towards the Kidmore End Road frontage following concerns raise that the crescent appeared squat and did not display more features of grandeur to reflect the townhouse style the design is based upon.
- The changes to the Crescent building include, raised floor to ceiling height (by 300mm) to ground and first floor level, addition of top light window above entrance doors, reduced width of the dormers, addition of 'quoining' to first floor level party wall lines, addition of soldier course banding and brick window headers and changing the sills from upvc to reconstituted stone.

Before and after Crescent street-scene following DRP review



Before



After



- Roof pitches to garages across the site adjusted to reflect the roof pitch of the host dwelling to provide a more coherent street-level appearance to the development as a whole.

6.20 In overall terms, following the revisions secured as a result of the DRP comments, the elevation and material details proposed are considered to present a varied and high-quality approach to the appearance of these aspects of the development. The proposed use of character areas and variations in dwelling design and materiality is considered to be well thought as you move through the development itself as well as in its context with the varied residential character present in the surrounding area.

6.21 The exact specifications of the materials and finishes to be used within the development, including boundary treatments, would continue to be secured by way of conditions which require full details to be submitted and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The relevant conditions attached to the outline planning permission would be carried over and continue to apply should the variation of conditions application, under consideration as Item 13 on the agenda, be granted.

Floor Plan Layout and Residential Amenity Areas

6.22 The dwelling mix is secured by way of the outline planning permission and would provide for a selection of accommodation sizes, ranging from 1 to 5-bedroom homes. The detailed floor plan layouts of the dwellings submitted as part of the reserved matters application demonstrate that all dwellings would meet the requirements of the Nationally Described Space Standards (NDSS) and as minimum are designed to the standards set out in M4(2) Category 2: Accessible

and adaptable dwellings of the Building Regulations. In addition to the above 11 of the properties achieve the standards of M4(3) Category 3: Wheelchair user dwellings of the Building Regulation as required by Policy H5 (Standards for New Housing).

6.23 Habitable rooms to all dwellings would be served by windows and are considered to provide for acceptable levels of amenity for future occupiers in terms of receipt of daylight, sunlight and available outlook. The Appearance details of the proposed dwelling floor plans layouts are considered to reaffirm the conclusions reached in granting outline planning permission: that all proposed dwellings would provide a suitable standard of accommodation for future occupiers as required by Policy CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity).

6.24 All houses would benefit from a private gardens. The gardens would have areas greater or equivalent to the gross floor area of the individual houses. Garden boundaries other private gardens and public areas who be provided in a mix of close board timber fencing or brick walls. The houses, as well as the residential apartments, would also have direct access to the large areas of public open space which are to be provided as part of the development. The Appearance details regarding the provision of residential amenity areas for future occupiers of the development are considered to reaffirm the conclusions reached in granting outline planning permission: that all proposed dwellings would be served by suitable private and communal residential amenity areas as required by Policy H10 (Private and Communal Outdoor Space).

Areas of Open Space, Street-Furniture and Apparatus

6.25 The reserved matters application is accompanied by a 'landscape vision plan' which outlines how the areas of open space within the development would appear. The details submitted relate to the Appearance of these spaces only and do not seek to alter the overall layout, quantum or types of open space or matters relating to trees or biodiversity which are secured under the outline planning permission.

6.26 The extensive areas of public open space within the development are proposed to provide an overarching green infrastructure framework. The treatment of these areas is largely based around tree retention and planting of new trees in public areas across the site. The submitted landscape vision plan shows that the 'Park and Garden' area located centrally within the site, which would contain the primary play area, is intended to form the focus for activity at the heart of the development and that there would be a framework of green footways leading off this area connecting with the variety of other public green and open spaces within the development.



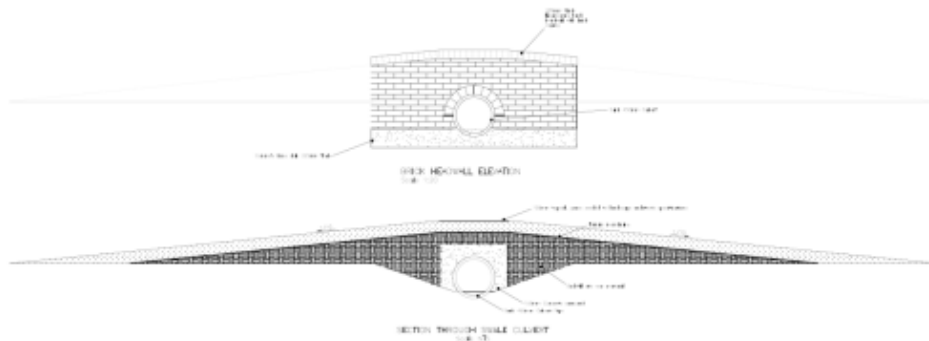
Legend:	
	Site Boundary
	Equipped Play Area
	Park and Garden
	Amenity Green Space
	Natural and Semi-natural Open Space
	SUDs
	Incidental Areas - Planting
	Front Gardens
	Private Rear Gardens

Plan Showing the Open Spaces Within the Development

6.27 The Appearance of the different open spaces within the development are, as was established when outline planning permission was granted, laid out in response to the existing site conditions, most notably in terms of retention and integration of existing trees into the areas of open space and wider development. The submitted landscape vision plan reaffirms the conclusions reached when outline planning permission was granted: in that the open spaces, together with the new landscaping and tree planting would, together with retention of existing trees, provide an overall verdant and open character to the proposed areas of open space and to the development as a whole.

6.28 The main area of public open space within the development, which is in the northeast corner of the site, is the principal area of ‘Natural/Semi-Natural’ open space. The appearance of this area would largely be characterised by retention of existing vegetation, trees and habitats together with

concentrations of new tree and shrub planting. This includes retention of the existing boundary tree belt and hedgerows. The northern most of the two proposed SuDS basins would also be located within this part of the site which is designed to appear as natural grassland area for the majority of the time when the basin is not in use. The drainage swale, which spans the length of the main area of open space connecting to the other centrally located drainage basin within the development, would incorporate six culverted crossing points which are considered to add visual interest to this part of the site. The swale crossing would be formed from brick and backfill site won materials with the footways over being grass seeded.



Section drawings of proposed swale crossings

- 6.29 Picnic tables and benches would also be scattered amongst the ‘Natural/Semi-Natural Open’ space providing areas for informal recreation, accessed via mown grass informal footpaths. The ‘Natural/Semi-Natural’ areas of opens space also wrap around the northern and western boundaries of the site providing a soft buffer to the remainder of the golf course to the north. A significant bank of retained trees on the northwest boundary of the Natural/Semi-Natural area of open space provide a screen with the rear of the adjacent properties to Eric Avenue.
- 6.30 The public open space located centrally in the site is proposed as ‘Park and Garden’ area and contains the primary play area. This areas would consist of ‘natural’ compartments of meadow and scrub and tall grass planting with hoggin footpaths delineating routes to connect to other open areas within the development around and between the central drainage attenuation basin and children’s play area. It is proposed that the children’s play area would have an emphasis on natural play with use of timber and stone materials for the play equipment and would include sensory planting. This ‘Park and Garden’ area is intended to be the focal point and hub of the site with picnic tables and outdoor chess sets.
- 6.31 Areas of ‘Amenity Green Space’ are proposed to the northwest corner of the site where the secondary equipped play area is located and close to the entrance of the site from Kidmore End Road. These areas are less formally laid out than the ‘Park and Garden’ areas of open space within the site and are based around retention of existing landscape features for informal recreation with new planting to be slow growing. These areas would be delineated by low

level post and rail fencing. The proposed 'Amenity Green Space' area to the Kidmore End Road frontage would include landscaped pockets of defensible space to the Kidmore End Road frontage within three planting to providing a green buffer. Visitor parking bays and bin collection points would either be edged with hedging and timber rails. This areas also extend into the centre of the development where tree planting is proposed along the spine access road into the site, facilitating the green link secured under the outline permission which connects through the site from the adjacent golf course land at one end of the development within Kidmore End Road at the other.

- 6.32 Public art is proposed in three different locations within the public open spaces throughout the development, to the Kidmore End Road Frontage within the 'Amenity Green Space', centrally within the 'Park and Garden' area of the site and towards the north boundary of the site within the area of 'Natural/Semi-Natural' open space. The proposed locations for the public art are considered to be acceptable in principle and full details would continue to be secured via obligation under the associated section 106 agreement.
- 6.33 The proposals confirm that street lighting would be provided to the primary and secondary roads and be designed to adoptable standards with low-level bollard lighting in some areas for safety and surveillance reasons. This approach is considered acceptable in principle, but full details of the lighting and specifications would continue to be secured under condition no. 21 (External Lighting) of the outline planning permission.
- 6.34 All private drives and parking bays would be surfaced in permeable block paving. Most of the roads within the development would be macadam surfaced and would drain via trapped gullies connecting to the main piped storm drain. Roads within the eastern part of the development, due to the flatter gradient of the land in this part of the site, would be surfaced in permeable block pavers.
- 6.35 Officers consider that the principles proposed regarding the appearance of the areas of open space and associated apparatus within the development are well considered. Notably the prevalence of the open spaces, tree retention and new planting within the development and to the site boundaries is considered to provide an interconnected open and green character to large portions of the development. The green and open spaces would provide a suitable transition in character from the remainder of the golf course land to the west of the site and the more suburban and built character of Kidmore End Road to the east and that of the other residential roads within surround the site to the north and south.
- 6.36 As discussed above full specifications of hard/soft landscaping, materials, biodiversity and ecological enhancements, play equipment, street-furniture, lighting and public art would continue to be secured by way of the recommended conditions and section 106 obligations under the outline planning permission which require the relevant details to be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority.

Section 106 Obligations and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

- 6.37 The section 106 legal agreement secured as part of the outline planning permission would continue to apply to the development and all obligations would remain in place. Approval of the reserved matter of Appearance would not require any changes to the already agreed obligations. The reserved matters appearance details would also not impact on the CIL liability of the development which would remain as per the outline planning permission.

Equalities Impact

- 6.38 When determining an application for planning permission the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. There is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups as identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this planning application. Therefore, in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the proposed development.

Matters Raised in Representations

- 6.39 Comments received which have been received relating to Appearance matters are addressed in the Appraisal section of the report above. A number of the comments received refer to issues such as the Layout of the development which for instance, is not a matter under consideration as part of this reserved matters application. The matter of Layout has already been determined under the outline permission. As discussed, above a separate variation of conditions application (ref. 221312) is under consideration as Item 13 on the agenda which discusses proposed changes to the development which include revised layout and landscaping information.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The Appearance reserved matter details submitted for the development are considered to be acceptable and to align within the principles of the outline planning permission.
- 7.2 The proposals are considered to accord with the relevant the requirements of Policy CC7 (Design and The Public Realm). The Appearance details are considered to demonstrate that the development would be of high design quality, and well-considered, with a suitable variation of dwelling design and use of materials, which would integrate with and maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the surrounding area. The proposals are considered to respond positively to local character and distinctiveness of the location. The Appearance details for the open spaces and associated apparatus within the development are also considered to demonstrate an overarching a high-quality public realm and green infrastructure throughout the site, which would be

visually attractive, usable and provide a development within a distinct open, green and verdant character.

- 7.3 In terms of wider considerations of the appearance of the development, Officers consider that the proposals are consistent with the development principles shown under the outline planning permission and is considered to fit within the context of the site in terms of visual amenity and landscape views from both local and longer range. No additional visual impacts are identified in terms of national (AONB) and local (Policy EN13 Major Landscape Area) landscape designations or in terms of setting of the distant heritage asset within the surrounding area (Policies EN1 and EN3) as a result of the Appearance reserved matter submissions. The Appearance details submitted are considered to result in a development which would align with the conclusions reached when outline planning permission was assessed.

Case Officer: Mr Matt Burns

Plans & Drawings

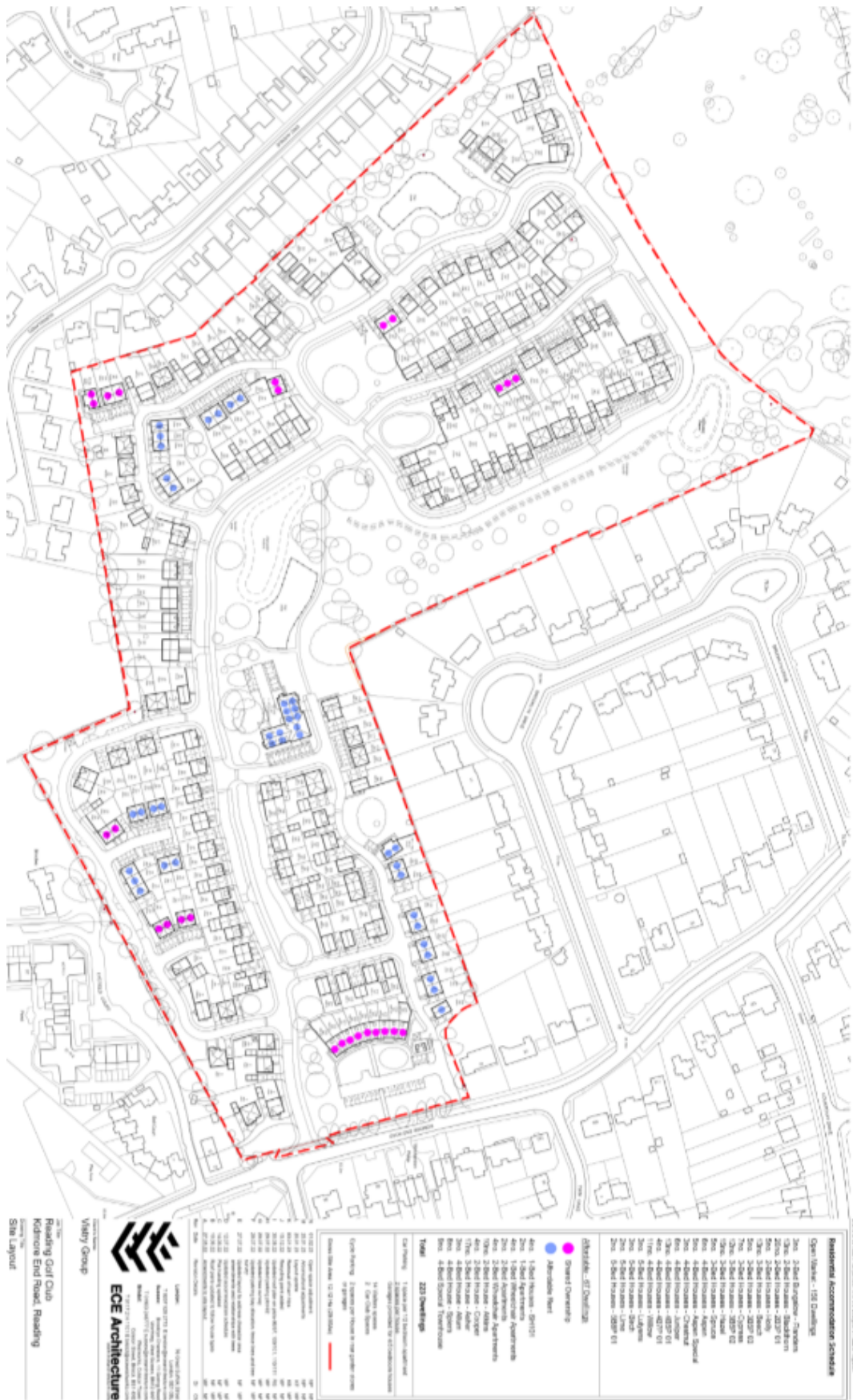
A summary of the plans and drawings submitted with the application are shown on the next pages of this report.

(Not all plans attached - full plans can be viewed on the Council website using the application search function:

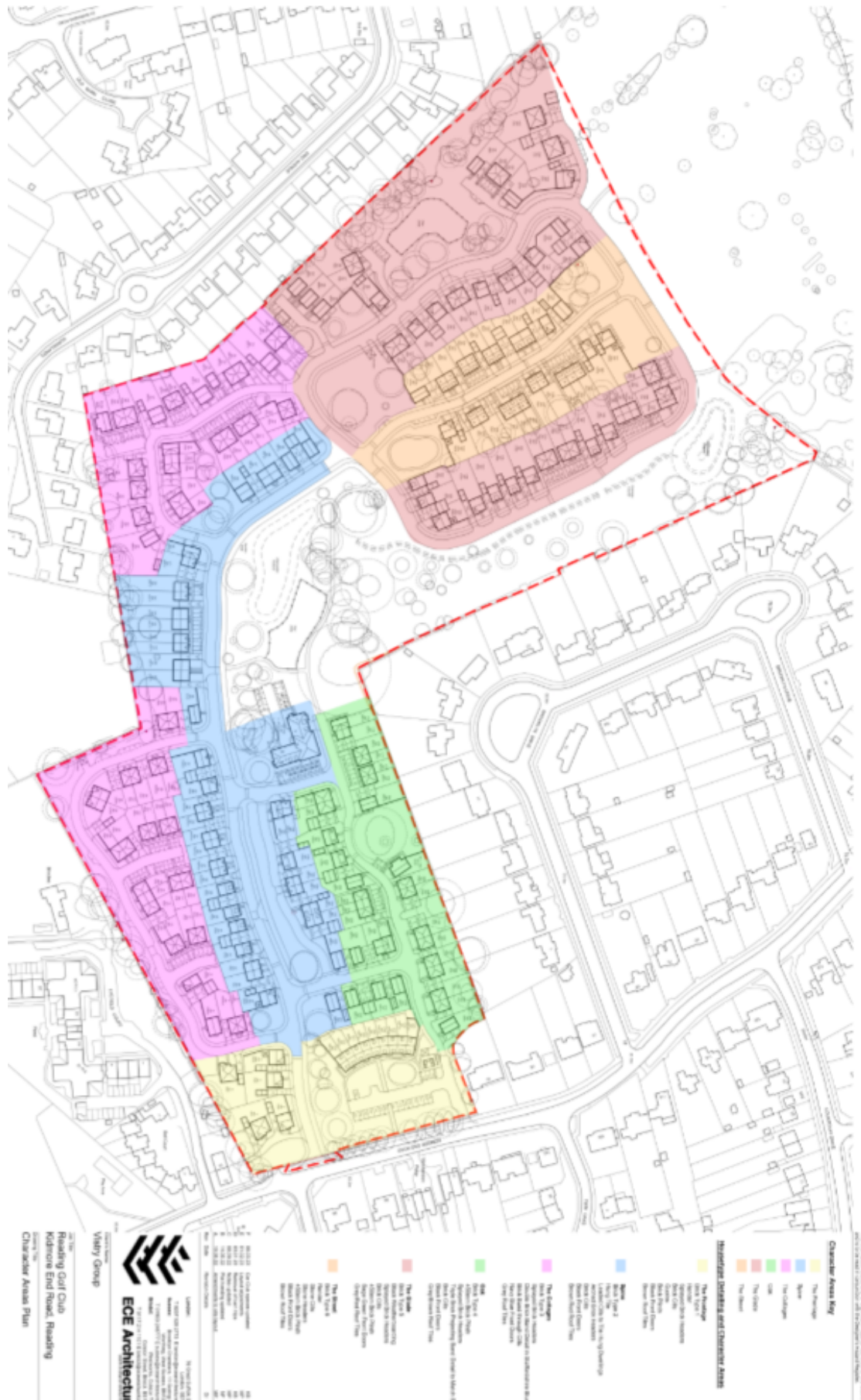
http://planning.reading.gov.uk/fastweb_PL/welcome.asp)



Site Layout Plan



Dwelling layout plan



Proposed Character Areas Plan



Proposed Materials Plan



<p>Key:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secure Trailer Storage Open Storage Recycling Bin Electric Vehicle (EV) Charger Electric Vehicle (EV) Plug (managed by external district or 3rd party) Electric Vehicle (EV) Plug (Private) 811 No-Dig Stormwater Drainage Gas Meter Water Meter (EV) Meter Water Meter (managed by external district or 3rd party) Water Meter (Private) 811 No-Dig 	<p>Legend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 2. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 3. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 4. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 5. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 6. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 7. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 8. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 9. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 10. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 11. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 12. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 13. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 14. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 15. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 16. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 17. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 18. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 19. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 20. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 21. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 22. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 23. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 24. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 25. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 26. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 27. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 28. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 29. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 30. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 31. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 32. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 33. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 34. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 35. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 36. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 37. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 38. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 39. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 40. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 41. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 42. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 43. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 44. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 45. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 46. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 47. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 48. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 49. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 50. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 51. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 52. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 53. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 54. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 55. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 56. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 57. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 58. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 59. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 60. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 61. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 62. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 63. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 64. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 65. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 66. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 67. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 68. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 69. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 70. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 71. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 72. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 73. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 74. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 75. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 76. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 77. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 78. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 79. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 80. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 81. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 82. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 83. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 84. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 85. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 86. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 87. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 88. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 89. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 90. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 91. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 92. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 93. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 94. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 95. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 96. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 97. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 98. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 99. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 100. 0.000' - 0.000' (0.000' x 0.000') 	<p>Scale:</p> <p>1" = 10' - 0"</p> <p>1:1000 @ A1 / 1:2000 @ A3</p> <p>North Arrow</p> <p>Project No: PL-060</p> <p>Date: 01.10.2</p>
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Detailed Layout Plan 2 - Central Parcel



Legend

- Site Boundary
- Escaped Play Area
- Park and Gardens
- Amenity Green Space
- Natural and Semi-natural Open Space
- SUDs
- Incidental Areas - Parking

Total of Green Space Provision On Site

Open Public Space:	
Escaped /	0.17ha
Designated Play Area	0.13ha
Park and Gardens	1.02ha
Amenity Green Space	1.17ha
Natural and Semi-natural	1.79ha
Total Green Space	4.28ha

Total Open Space 4.28ha

ECE Architecture
 21 The
 Reading Golf Club
 Kilmore End Road, Reading
 RG2 0AB

Visory Group
 21 The
 Reading Golf Club
 Kilmore End Road, Reading
 RG2 0AB

Proposed Open Spaces Layout Plan



Aspen House Type



Willow House Type



First Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan



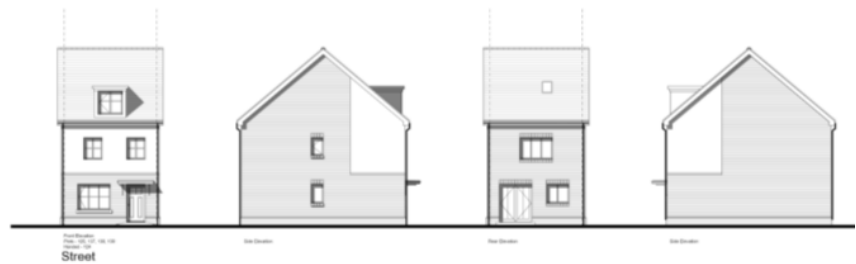
Juniper House Type



Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

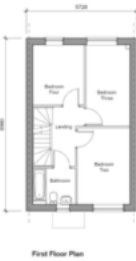


Ground Floor Plan

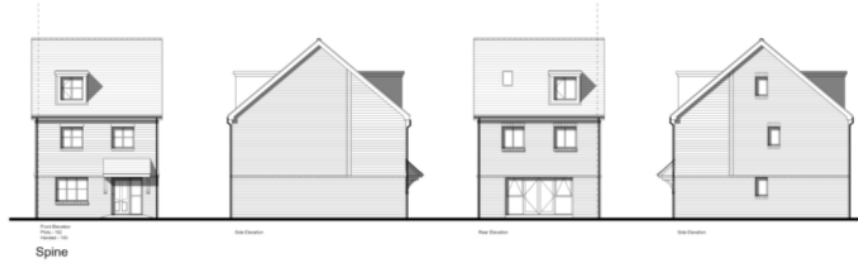
Beech House Type



5B8P01 House Type



Allum House Type





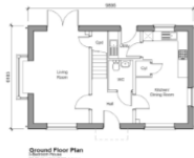
Copper House Type



4B7P01 House Type



Lutyens House Type



Spruce House Type



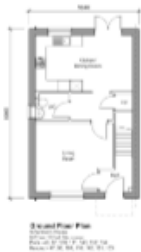
2B3P01 House Type



SH101 House Type



Cypress House Type



Hazel House Type



First Floor Plan



Ground Floor Plan



Glade

Birch House Type



Ground Floor Plan

First Floor Plan



Cottages



Spine



Ground Floor Plan

First Floor Plan



Spine



3B5P02 House Type



Lime House Type



4B5P01 House Type



First Floor Plan



Ground Floor Plan
 1 Bedroom House
 1 Living Room
 1 Kitchen
 1 Bathroom
 1000mm x 1000mm



Front Elevation
 Side Elevation
 Rear Elevation
Cottages

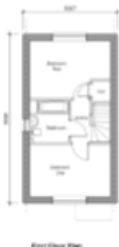


Front Elevation
 Side Elevation
 Rear Elevation
Spine



Front Elevation
 Side Elevation
 Rear Elevation

Holly House Type



First Floor Plan



Ground Floor Plan
 1 Bedroom House
 1 Living Room
 1 Kitchen
 1 Bathroom
 1000mm x 1000mm



Front Elevation
 Side Elevation
 Rear Elevation
Cottages



Front Elevation
 Side Elevation
 Rear Elevation
Spine

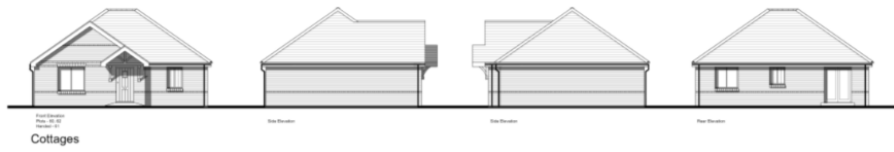


Front Elevation
 Side Elevation
 Rear Elevation
Spine



Front Elevation
 Side Elevation
 Rear Elevation

Blackthorn House Type



Flanders House Type



3B5P03 House Type



Speirs House Type



Atkins House Type



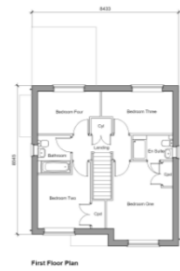
Chestnut House Type



Glade



Spruce House Type

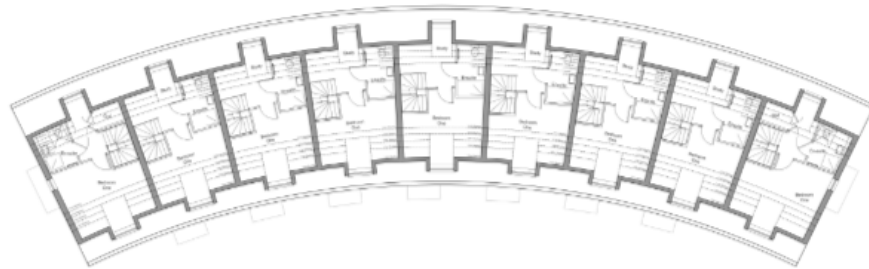


Street



Spine

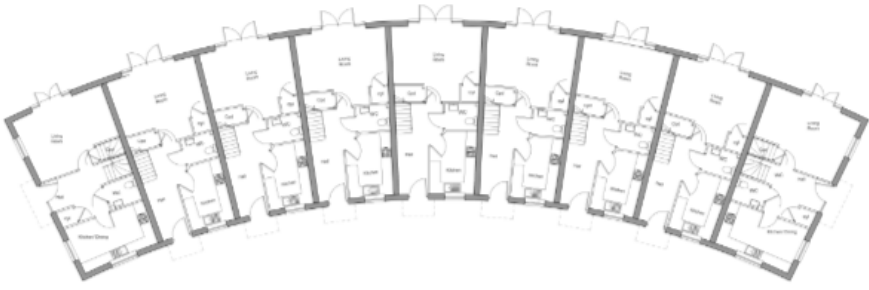
Aspen Special House Type



Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan

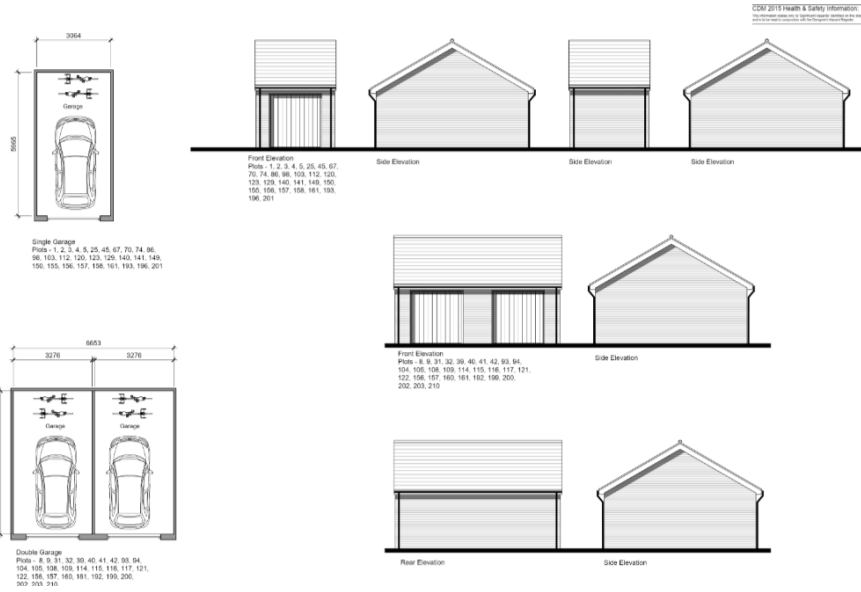


Ground Floor Plan

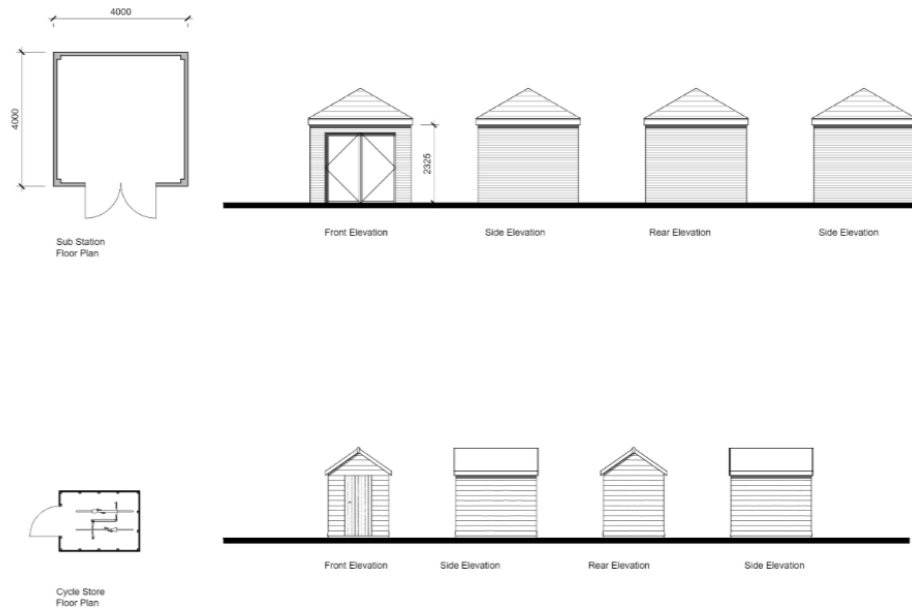
1. Living Room	2. Living Room	3. Living Room	4. Living Room	5. Living Room	6. Living Room	7. Living Room	8. Living Room
10.15	10.15	10.15	10.15	10.15	10.15	10.15	10.15



Crescent Townhouse House Type



Proposed Garages



Proposed Sheds and Substation



Ground Floor Plan



Second Floor Plan



First Floor Plan



Front Elevation



Rear Elevation



Side Elevation



Side Elevation

Proposed Flats



Street Scene A-A (Frontage) (Oak)



Street Scene B-B (Street)



Street Scene C-C (Glade)



Street Scene D-D (Spine) (Frontage)



Street Scene E-E (Cottages) (Frontage)



Street Scene F-F (Frontage)



Proposed Street-Scenes



Street Scene Z-Z (Street)



Street Scene AA-AA (Cottages)

Street Scene BB-BB (Cottages)



Street Scene CC-CC (Spine)

(Cottages)



Street Scene DD-DD (Cottages)



Street Scene Q-Q (Cottages)

(Spine)

(Oak)



Street Scene R-R (Spine)



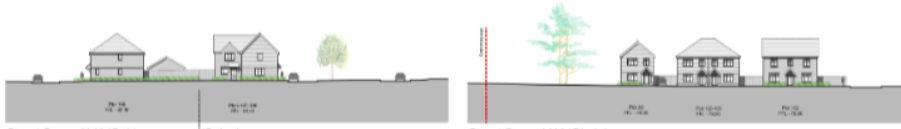
Street Scene S-S (Glade)



Proposed Street-Scenes



Street Scene T-T (Oak)



Street Scene U-U (Oak)

(Spine)

Street Scene V-V (Glade)



Street Scene W-W (Glade)



Street Scene X-X (Glade)



Street Scene Y-Y (Glade)



Street Scene G-G (Cottages)

(Spine)

(Oak)



Street Scene H-H (Cottages)



Street Scene I (Cottages)



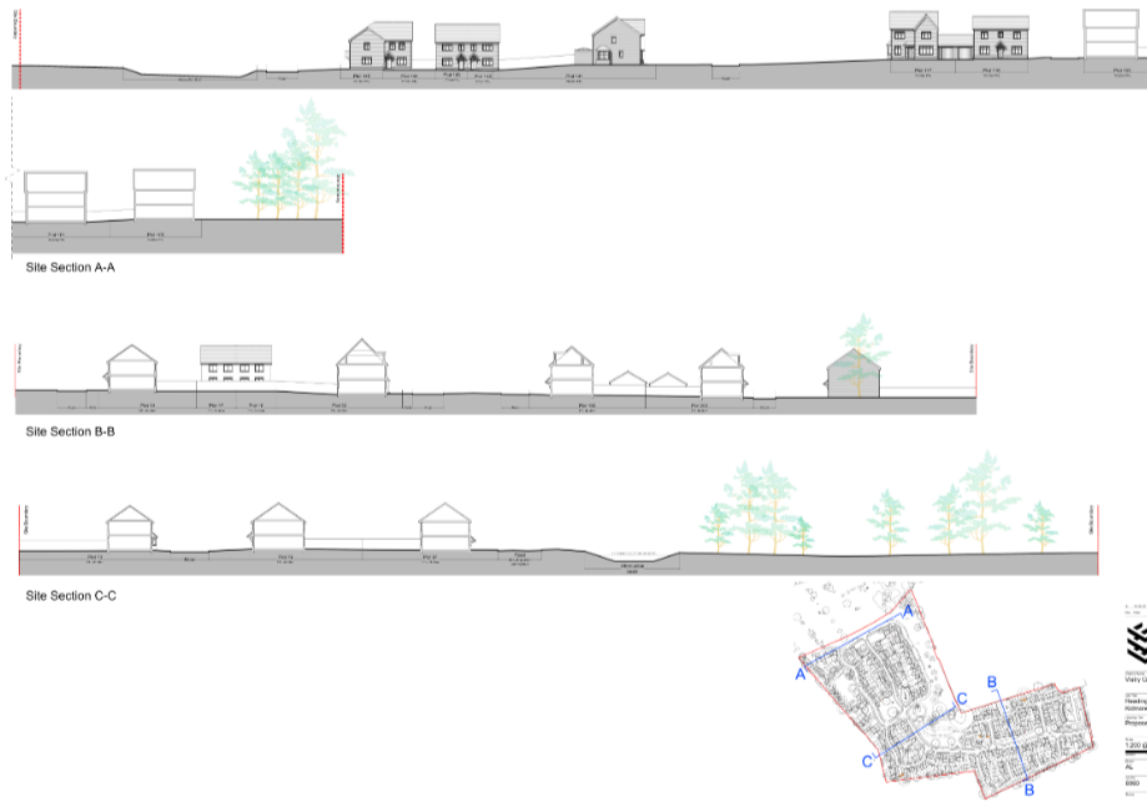
Street Scene J-J (Glade)



Proposed Street-Scenes



Proposed Street-Scenes



Proposed Site Cross Sections



Proposed Visual



Proposed Visual



Proposed Visual



Proposed Landscape Vision Plan

COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29th March 2023

Ward: Emmer Green

App No: 230024/APC

Address: Reading Golf Club, 17 Kidmore End Road, Emmer Green

Proposal: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 29 (Construction Method Statement) of planning permission ref. 211843

Applicant: Vistry Thames Valley

8 Week Target Decision Date: 27/01/2023

RECOMMENDATION:

Delegate to the Assistant Director of Planning, Transport and Public Protection Services (ADPTPPS) to approve the Constriction Method Statement documents set out below under condition no. 29 of outline planning permission ref. 211843OUT:

Condition 29 Approved Documents:

- Vistry Housebuilding - Reading Golf Club - Construction Method Statement ref. VG-CMS001 Revision D - March 2023
- Appendix A - Site Compound Plan Rev C
- Appendix B - Site Compound Demolition
- Appendix C - Close Boarded Fence
- Appendix D - Steel Fencing Un-sheeted
- Appendix D - Steel Fencing with Impermeable Sheeting
- Appendix D - Steel Fencing with Vented Sheeting
- Appendix E - Gate in Site Hoarding
- Appendix E - Site Hoarding
- Appendix F - Sales Images for Hoarding Rev A
- Appendix G - No Dig Heras Fencing
- Appendix H - Site Traffic Management Plan Rev A
- Appendix I - Site Segregation Plan
- Appendix J - Construction Sequencing for Internal Roads
- Appendix K - Construction Phasing Plan
- Appendix L - VG-TBT-SHE-013 Dust and Air Quality
- Appendix M - VG-TBT-SHE-019 Noise and Vibration
- Appendix N - D2218AMS (Arboricultural Method Statement)

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 17th March 2023

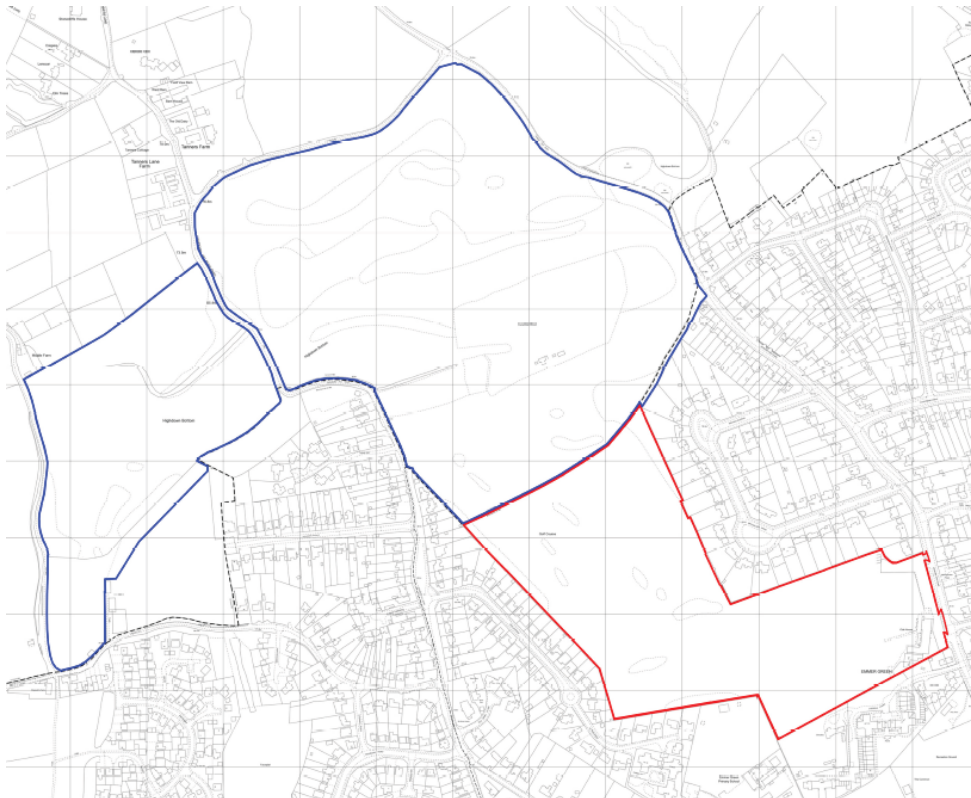
Informatives:

1. The above condition shall have been considered to have been discharged, providing that the development is undertaken in accordance with the approved details.

2. Please note that it is the responsibility of the developer to ensure that all relevant conditions are complied with during the construction and/or subsequent use of the development

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The outline permission site, delineated by the red line boundary, is 12.5ha in size and forms part of the former Reading Golf Club playing course.



Location Plan - Red Line Area - Application Site and Land within Reading Borough. Blue Line Area - Land under the Applicant's Control within South Oxfordshire District

1.2 Outline Planning Permission ref. 211843 was granted at the site on 31st March 2022, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance only, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential scheme (C3 use) to include affordable housing and public open space at the former reading golf club.

1.3 The development granted outline planning permission included:

- 223 residential dwellings including 67 (30%) affordable houses.
- 442 vehicle parking spaces
- A development layout set around a central spine road providing access from Kidmore End Road and a series of circular cul de sacs leading off from this central access road.

- 3.89ha of public open space and 0.74ha of public green space (total 4.63ha)
- A 0.16ha Local Equipped Area of Play (LEAP)
- Removal of 112 trees and planting of 196 new trees (net gain of 84 trees)
- SuDS

2. PROPOSALS AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

2.1 The application seeks approval of details under condition no. 29 of outline planning permission ref. 211843 relating to the Construction Method Statement (CMS) for the development.

2.2 Condition no. 29 states the following:

29. No development shall commence on site, including any works of demolition, until a site-specific Construction Method Statement has been submitted to and been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The Statement shall provide for:

A. The parking of vehicles and site operatives and visitors, to be shown on a Plan not less than 1:500 and to include the total amount of parked vehicles;

B. Loading and unloading of plant and materials relating to demolition and construction of the development: areas to be shown on a plan not less than 1:500;

C. Storage of plant and materials relating to demolition and construction of the development: areas to be shown on a plan not less than 1:500;

D. The erection and maintenance of security hoarding (including decorative displays/murals/scaffolding if required);

E. Wheel washing facilities;

F. Measures on-site to control the deposition of dirt/mud on surrounding roads during demolition and construction;

G. Measures for controlling the use of site lighting whether required for safe working or for security purposes;

H. Method of any piling;

I. Footpath Closures/Road Closures needed during demolition and construction;

J. Traffic Management needed during demolition and construction;

K. Times, routes and means of access into and from the site for demolition and construction traffic and delivery vehicles (including the removal of any associated construction and demolition waste from the site and methods of preventing deposition of materials on the public highway);

L. A commitment to regular meetings with the Council's Streetworks Co-ordinator;

M. A dust mitigation and monitoring scheme during demolition and construction;

N. Measures to control noise including controls on timing of operations (to include quiet periods);

O. Provisions to be made for the control of vibrations coming from the site during demolition and construction

P. Temporary external lighting relating to demolition and construction works;
Q. A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from the demolition and construction works;
R. Measures to control exposure to contaminated land;
S. Full details of pest control measures following any demolition required. Where necessary, capping of drains/sewers and baiting arrangements
T. Contact details and a “helpline” number should be provided so that problems can be reported and dealt with swiftly.
The measures within the approved Statement shall be adhered to throughout the demolition and construction period unless otherwise agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

REASON: These details are required due to insufficient information being contained within this submission and in the interests of protecting the amenity of local land uses or neighbouring residents, the character of the area and highway safety in accordance with Policy CC8 and TR3 of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019.

2.3 A previous application (ref. 220958) for approval of the CMS under condition no. 29 was submitted on 30th June 2022 but the Applicant failed to obtain approval for the CMS. The decision notice for this application was issue on 4th January 2023 which confirmed that the CMS was not approved at that time for the following reasons:

- a) The Construction Method Statement does not address where the parking will take place once the housing is constructed on the compound area.*
- b) The Construction Method Statement does not address where the loading/unloading will take place once the housing is constructed on the compound area.*
- c) The Construction Method Statement does not address where storage of plant and materials will be located once the housing is constructed on the compound area.*
- d) The Construction Method Statement does not include sufficient detail in relation to control of construction related dust or Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) (2014) guidance as specified in section 7.7.2 of the Temple Air Quality Assessment submitted and upon which outline planning permission was granted.*
- e) Most significantly of the above the guidance asks for dust monitoring positions to be agreed with the Local Authority and carried out 3 months in advance of development of the site. Continuous dust monitoring is required for this development, to be positioned at the borders of the site nearest to residential properties. Details of this are required to be included within the Construction Method Statement.*

f) The Construction Method Statement does not include sufficient detail in relation to control of construction noise. The statement is required to make reference to BS5228:2009+A1:2014 Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites. The measures for noise and vibration control from this standard should be included within the statement, including noise monitoring to ensure that target noise levels (worked out from BS5228) are met at the site boundaries near to residential properties. In addition, we would expect the developer to apply for a Control of Pollution Act S61 consent to ensure noise from the site is adequately controlled.

2.4 The current application is accompanied by a revised detailed construction method statement which again seeks to demonstrate compliance with the detailed requirements of the condition set out above. The documents submitted are:

- Vistry Housebuilding - Reading Golf Club - Construction Method Statement ref. VG-CMS001 Revision C - January 2023
- Appendix A - Site Compound Plan Rev C
- Appendix B - Site Compound Demolition
- Appendix C - Close Boarded Fence
- Appendix D - Steel Fencing Unsheeted
- Appendix D - Steel Fencing with Impermeable Sheeting
- Appendix D - Steel Fencing with Vented Sheeting
- Appendix E - Gate in Site Hoarding
- Appendix E - Site Hoarding
- Appendix F - Sales Images for Hoarding Rev A
- Appendix G - No Dig Heras Fencing
- Appendix H - Site Traffic Management Plan Rev A
- Appendix I - Site Segregation Plan
- Appendix J - Construction Sequencing for Internal Roads
- Appendix K - Construction Phasing Plan
- Appendix L - VG-TBT-SHE-013 Dust and Air Quality
- Appendix M - VG-TBT-SHE-019 Noise and Vibration
- Appendix N - D2218AMS (Arboricultural Method Statement)

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 10th March 2023

2.4 Applications to discharge planning conditions are usually dealt with by your officers under delegated powers, however, this Application has been called to Planning Applications Committee for determination by the Chair (Councillor Lovelock) and Vice Chair (Councillor Leng) of the Committee due to the level of local interest in the impacts of the construction of the development upon the surrounding area.

3. PLANNING HISTORY

3.1 211843: Outline planning application, with matters reserved in respect of Appearance, for demolition of the existing clubhouse and the erection of a new residential scheme (C3 use to include affordable housing) and public open space

at the former Reading Golf Club. Granted on 31st March 2022 (linked to a S106).

- 3.2 220738: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 19 (Habitat Enhancement Scheme), 20 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) and 44 (Archaeology) of planning permission ref. 211843. Split Decision on 4th November 2022 (details under condition 44 approved but details under condition 19 and 20 not approved)
- 3.3 220930: Application for approval of reserved matters (appearance) submitted pursuant to outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration.
- 3.4 220958: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 25, 26 (Contamination) and 29 (Construction Method Statement) of planning permission ref. 211843. Split Decision on 4th January 2023 (details under conditions 25 and 26 approved but details under condition 29 not approved)
- 3.5 220960: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 21 (External Lighting) 35 (Refuse) and 39 (Vehicle Parking) of planning permission ref. 211843. Withdrawn on 30th August 2022
- 3.6 221312: Outline planning application with matters reserved in respect of Appearance for demolition of clubhouse and erection of a new residential scheme (c3 use) including affordable housing and public open space at former reading golf club without complying with conditions 5 (Plans), 8&9 (Emissions) 10&11 (SuDS), 12 (Levels), 13 (Mix), 17 (AMS), 19 (Habitat Enhancement), 20 (CEMP), 22 (Biodiversity), 25&26 (Contamination), 29 (CMS), 34 (Cycle Parking), 35 (Refuse), 39 (Car Parking), 41 (Traffic Calming) & 44 (Archaeology) of outline permission 211843 for amendments including changes to layout, mix, parking, drainage, landscaping, open space and energy. Under Consideration.
- 3.7 221713: Application for approval of details reserved by conditions 47 (water infrastructure phasing plan) and 48 (water network upgrades) of outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration
- 3.8 221762: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 6 (Phasing) of planning permission ref. 211843. Under Consideration
- 3.9 221764: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 7 (Materials) of outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration
- 3.10 221765: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 21 (external lighting scheme) of outline planning application ref. 221312/VAR. Under Consideration
- 3.11 230024: Application for approval of details reserved by condition 29 (Construction Method Statement) of planning permission ref. 211843. Under Consideration
- 3.12 230073: Application for Approval of details reserved by condition 14 (hard and soft landscaping) of planning permission ref. 211843. Under Consideration

4. CONSULTATIONS

RBC Transport

4.1 No objections. Comments on the relevant sections of the CMS set out below:

a) **Space on site where vehicles of site operatives and visitors can be parked with details of how site operatives and visitors will be required to make use of the parking area provided;**

The parking area for the demolition phase of the development will be located on the original hard standing at the front of the site which currently serves as car parking (as shown on (READ-DM-001 Rev A).

The new bell mouth junctions will be the first works to be undertaken following the demolition phase and once constructed all access to and from the site will be via these new access points.

During the construction phase, the parking areas for site operatives and visitors will be located inside the site as shown as on the site Compound & Material Storage Layout (READ-SC-001 Rev B). As the programme reaches the material storage, operative parking and welfare area, these areas will be reduced in size and transfer other areas within the site.

The CMS confirms that no parking associated with development will occur of the public highway at any time to ensure there is no impact on the surrounding residential roads.

b) **Loading and unloading of plant and materials relating to demolition and construction of the development**

During the demolition phase, the area for the loading and unloading of plant and materials will be within the separate fenced demolition compound constructed on the original hard standing which currently serves as car parking as shown on “Demolition Plan” located at Appendix B.

During the construction phase of the development all construction materials and plant will be off-loaded at the relevant materials storage area as shown on the “Compound Plan” located at Appendix A which are located within the site.

When the final units are under construction, the material storage will occupy the remaining visitor bays in areas where construction is still commencing. All vehicles will access and egress the site in forward gear. No vehicle will be permitted to reverse into, or out of the site.

c) **Location on site for storage of plant and materials used in constructing the development**

During the demolition phase, the storage of plant will be within the separate fenced demolition compound constructed on the original hard standing which currently serves as car parking. These storage areas are shown on “Demolition Plan” located at Appendix B.

During the construction phase of the development all construction materials and plant will be provided within the materials storage areas. These areas are shown on the “Compound Plan” located at Appendix A.

When the final units are under construction, the material storage will occupy the remaining visitor bays in areas where construction is still commencing.

d) The erection and maintenance of security hoarding

Security hoarding will be located around the perimeter of the site in the form of 1.8m close board timber fencing or Heras fencing. To the front of the site, along Kidmore End Road hoarding will be used. It is stated that these site boundaries will initially surround the whole site but will move back in line with construction progress. The majority of the existing boundary fence will be retained for the demolition with no dig heras fencing placed to the inside of it. Once erected, maintenance of the security fencing / hoarding will fall to the site team led by the Site Manager who will carry out weekly inspections of the site perimeter and respond to any issues raised regarding the condition of the fencing / hoarding by local residents. This is acceptable providing all gates open into the site, away from the public highway.

e) Wheel washing facilities;

Wheel washing facilities will be kept on site throughout the duration of the build and will be located at the entrance to the site. It is stated that this will gradually move back along the spine road as more plots are completed as outlined on the “Site Segregation Plan” Appendix I.

f) Measures on-site to control the deposition of dirt/mud on surrounding roads during demolition and construction;

Wheel washing facilities will be kept on site throughout the duration of the build. The Principal Contractor will regularly monitor the on-site roads and the section of Kidmore End Road outside of the entrance for dirt and debris and will arrange for road sweeps when necessary.

g) Measures for controlling the use of site lighting whether required for safe working or for security purposes;

No comments to make.

h) Method of any piling;

No comments to make.

i)Footpath Closures/Road Closures needed during demolition and construction;

All demolition and construction will be within the boundary of site, with the exception of the formation of two new bellmouth junctions and the closure of the existing entrances. Any footpath diversions required to construct the new bellmouths or close the existing entrances will be agreed through the S278 process with the Highways Authority.

j) Traffic Management needed during demolition and construction;

It is stated that during the Construction Phase there will be sufficient space to turn vehicles on-site, and all vehicles will access and egress the site in forward gear. No vehicles will be permitted to reverse into, or out of, the site.

All loading and unloading from delivery vehicles and construction traffic (including building materials, finished or unfinished products, parts, crates, packing materials and waste) will take place inside the site material compounds only.

The roads outside the site will be kept clear at all times with clear access for fire appliances and emergency services.

Once appointed the Site Manager will contact Reading Councils Street Works Co-ordinator and offer to meet them prior to any works starting on site.

k) Times, routes and means of access into and from the site for demolition and construction traffic and delivery vehicles

Given the location of the site, permitted delivery times will avoid peak traffic hours to avoid congestion within the town and residential areas. Where possible, deliveries will be scheduled to arrive outside of the hours 08:00-09:30 and 17:00-18:00 and in the afternoon (14:45-15:30) to avoid times when children are most likely to be walking past the site to school. The CMS states that should a delivery arrive outside the agreed schedules hours, a bankman will be available to navigate deliveries into the site safely.

A traffic route from Junction 11 to the site has been submitted using the classified road network for as long as possible. However, in order to access the site, HGV and plant deliveries will be routed along Kidmore End Road which can't accommodate 2-way movement on some sections of the road. The CMS confirms that prior to commencement of demolition or construction works on site Vistry will contact RBC Development Control/Streetworks team to determine where a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order can be implemented to provide a passing location along Kidmore End Road and that Vistry will submit the relevant application form, and funding for both legal and works costs would be covered by Vistry, via the TTRO process.

The TTRO works are likely to entail the introduction of waiting restrictions (such as a single or double yellow line) for a short stretch to break up the length of on-street parking to facilitate a passing place along Kidmore End Road. It is not anticipated that this would significantly impact the availability of on-street parking for the local residents as we would look to introduce restrictions where there are existing breaks for driveway access.

RBC Environmental Protection

- 4.2 No objections. Comments discussed in Appraisal section of this report.

RBC Planning Natural Environment Team (Trees)

- 4.3 The Officer is concerned that the proposed site segregation plan (Appendix I to the CMS) which shows how construction fencing and hoarding would be re-sited as the development progresses presents some conflicts with the proposed position of tree protection fencing required for the demolition and construction works. Other comments discussed in Appraisal section of this report.

Public Consultation

- 4.4 No public consultation is required in relation to applications which seek approval of details reserved by planning conditions. However, given the likely level of local interest in the application, neighbour notification letters advising that the application had been submitted were sent to the following local community groups who commented on the original planning application when outline planning permission for the development was granted:

- Keeper Emmer Green (KEG)
- Caversham and District Residents Association (CADRA)
- Emmer Green Residents Association (EGRA)
- Reading Friends of the Earth
- Caversham Globe

- 4.5 Emmer Green Ward Councillors were also notified when the application was submitted.

- 4.6 As with all applications the proposals were also available to view on the Council website. Six letters of objection to the application have been received raising the following issues (*officer comments in italics where not addressed in Appraisal section of this report*):

- Concern regarding the high volume of construction traffic that will be required along Kidmore End Road. The road is narrow and due to resident vehicle parking, traffic is only one way at any time and the road narrows approaching the Peppard Road Junction. Lorries have to cross the centre line and will cause constant congestion and blocking of the road.
- In the past, when construction lorries have passed along Kidmore End Road, parked cars have suffered gravel and stone damage.

- The danger of HGV traffic to children and other pedestrians along Kidmore End Road has been greatly underestimated. School children pass along the road going to and from school and the park and elderly residents of Lyefield Court also pass along it to get to the shops, doctors surgery or cross the road to the bus stop
- Kidmore End Road has two bus routes (no.s 23 and 24) which are an additional hazard for HGVs.
- Congestion at the junction of Kidmore End Road and Peppard Road will result in traffic diverting along Grove Road.
- There is a serious danger to children and the elderly at the exit point from the golf course to Kidmore End Road from high level lorry cabins and low-level children and elderly using mobility vehicles, due to impaired visibility.
- There is inadequate provision for external (independent) monitoring of noise and dust levels. There is no plan for local residents to access the readings from monitoring equipment. *Dust monitoring arrangements are to be agreed with the Environmental Protection Team.*
- Many recently re-surfaced roads in the local area are already cracking and losing their surfacing creating potholes. Regular use of the roads by HGVs will significantly exacerbate this issue.
- The development should not have been approved as traffic has detrimental impact on the community.
- Traffic calming measures should be put in place before construction starts. *The CMS confirms that the new bellmouth accesses to the site from Kidmore End Road (as secured by s278 works agreement under the associated s106 agreement) will be provided prior to construction works starting. The CMS also confirms that the developer will obtain a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) to provide a two-way passing location for vehicles on Kidmore End Road.*
- The developer has confirmed that there will be in excess of 100 HGV movements in and out of the development along Kidmore End Road per day. *The CMS states that 20-30 HGV movements are projected.*
- The developer states they intend to install designated pedestrian walkways which will be physically segregated from the road using traffic barriers, but the CMS does not state where these walkways will be located. *These walkways would be within the construction site only for site operatives and visitors*
- The narrowness of Kidmore End Road is an issue along its length from the golf club entrance to Peppard Road and of particular concern are the narrow pathways outside the White Horse and Black Horse pubs.
- The CMS states that the developer will encourage all site operatives to share cars and utilise public transport to minimise traffic which is unrealistic.
- The CMS states that the developer will co-ordinate with local schools to offer services of an external trainer to visit and brief children on the dangers of construction sites and traffic which I welcomed. However, it is unrealistic to expect this to have a lasting effect on young children unless the trainer visits the schools on a regular basis for the next five years. How will this arrangement work? *The CMS states that the frequency of this training will be agreed between the contractor and the school as necessary.*

- How will roads outside the site be kept clear for emergency services access and passage?
- The CMS states that deliveries to the site will not take place between 0800 to 0930 hours, 1445 and 1530 hours and 1700 and 1800 hours which is welcomed. However, the CMS also states that if deliveries arrive during these time, they will still be allowed to proceed - this is not acceptable. The restrictions to not appear to cover vehicles departing the site.
- A fully maintained site log of vehicle entry and exit from the site must be kept *This is standard site security practice.*
- The CMS states traffic will only be supervised within the development site. This should be expanded such that all construction traffic is monitored between the site and Peppard Road.
- How will RBC ensure the CMS is complied with? *If the CMS is approved the developer will be required to carry out the demolition and construction activities associated within the development only in accordance with the approved documents as per condition 29 of the outline planning permission. The Council's Planning Enforcement Team would investigate if any breaches of compliance with the requirements of the CMS are identified. The associated Section 61 consents for control of noise and vibration and Temporary Traffic Regulation Order arrangements would be legally binding upon the developer.*

4.7 For clarity, public comments received in relation to the previous application (ref. 220958) for approval of the CMS, which was refused, have also been reviewed again and any additional comments not covered in those summarised above are set out below:

- Concern about noise and disturbance from the development given the site is surrounded by residential dwellings, a retirement complex and a school. The development will have a negative mental impact on local residents for five years whilst it is built. Many residents work from home.
- The construction compound and materials should not be stored so closely to the gardens of Eric Avenue. This will result in noise, dust and light pollution.
- No site notice advising that the application has been submitted was displayed.
- Construction activities will release ground contaminants
- The construction contractor should be required to register with the Considerate Constructors Scheme (CCS).

5 RELEVANT PLANNING POLICY AND GUIDANCE

5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) which states at Paragraph 11 "Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development".

National Policy

5.2 National Planning Policy Framework (2021). The following chapters are the most relevant (others apply to a lesser extent):

2. Achieving sustainable development
4. Decision-making
8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
9. Promoting sustainable transport
15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment

Manual for Streets

Local Policy

5.3 Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019)

The relevant policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters

CA1b: Sites for Development in Caversham and Emmer green:

CA1b	PART OF READING GOLF COURSE, KIDMORE END ROAD
	<i>Development for residential and replacement clubhouse, subject to the future provision of golf on the remainder of the Golf Club site, which fulfils an important sports and leisure function for Reading, being secured. On-site facilities should be provided to mitigate impacts on community infrastructure, including for healthcare. On-site public open space will be provided.</i>
	<i>Development should:</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• <i>Avoid adverse effects on important trees including those protected by TPO;</i>• <i>Provide a green link across the site from Kidmore End Road to the remainder of the golf course, rich in plant species and habitat opportunities;</i>• <i>Ensure that vehicular access is provided from suitable roads to the area to be retained for golf;</i>• <i>Take measures to mitigate impacts on the highway network, particularly on Kidmore End Road and Tanners Lane;</i>• <i>Include all parking requirements within the site to avoid exacerbating parking issues on existing streets;</i>• <i>Take account of potential archaeological significance; and</i>• <i>Take account of the potential impact on water and wastewater infrastructure in conjunction with Thames Water, and make provision for upgrades where required.</i>
	<i>Site size: 3.75 ha 90-130 dwellings, community provision including healthcare and replacement clubhouse</i>



5 APPRAISAL

5.1 This section of the report will consider whether the submitted CMS and associated appendices have demonstrated compliance with each of the requirements set out under conditions no. 29 of planning permission ref. 211843.

a) **Details of parking of vehicles, site operatives and visitors**

b) **Details of loading and unloading of plant and materials relating to demolition and construction of the development**

c) **Details of storage of plant and materials relating to the demolition and construction of the development**

5.2 During the initial demolition phase of the development the parking area for operatives and visitors (5 spaces), areas for loading, unloading and storage of plant and materials and operative welfare facilities, would be located on the existing hard standing car park at the front of the site adjacent to Kidmore End Road. This area is directly adjacent to the clubhouse buildings at the front of the site which are the buildings to be demolished.

5.3 Use of the existing hardstanding car park means that the activities here would not adversely affect any retained trees and there would be limited distance for plant and materials to travel between the compound area and areas of the site where demolition would take place.

5.4 Vehicles and operatives would access this area via the existing access from Kidmore End Road. The demolition phase parking area is shown on the demolition plan below which is attached as appendix B to the CMS.

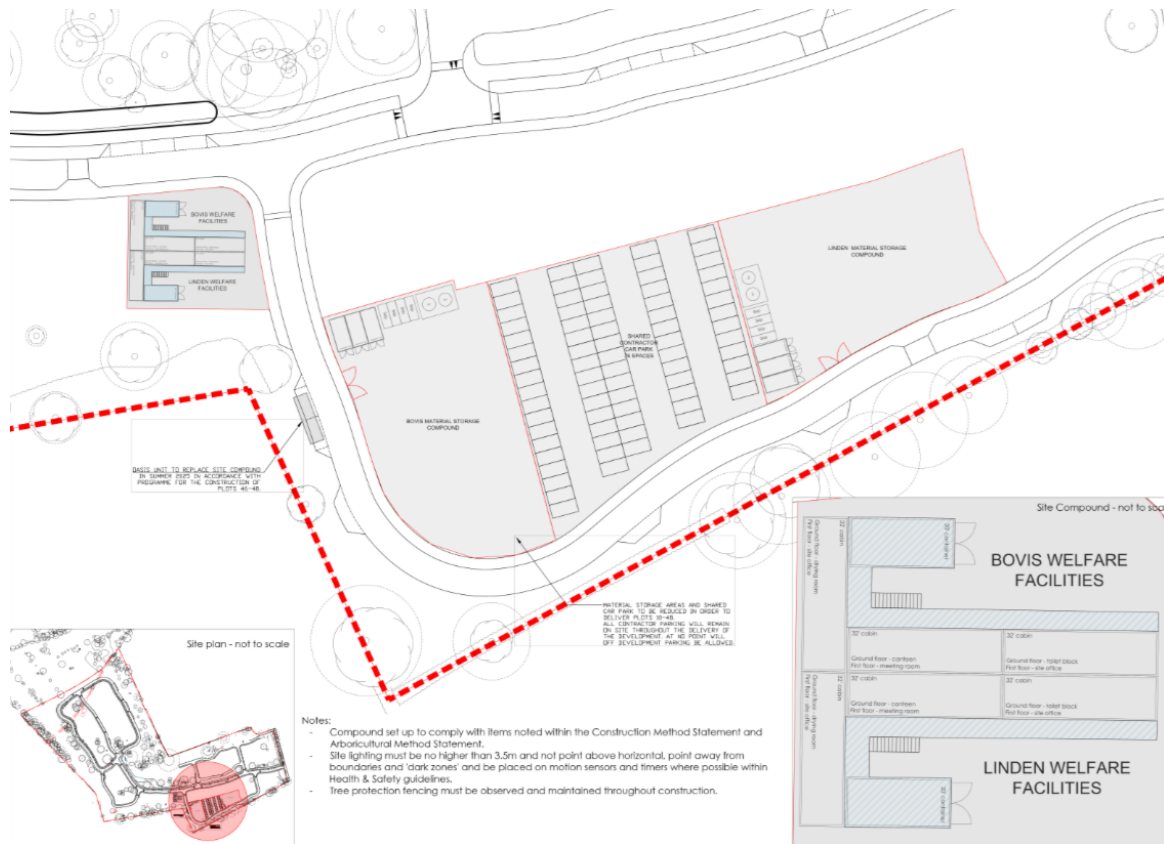


Demolition Plan (Appendix B of the CMS)

5.5 The CMS document confirms that the new bellmouth junction accesses to the site from Kidmore End Road, which are to be provided as part of the section 278 highway works agreement secured under the section 106 agreement linked to the outline planning permission, will be the first works to be undertaken following the demolition phase. All access to and from the site for the construction phase of the development would be via these new bellmouth junction accesses.

5.6 During the construction phase, parking areas for site operatives and visitors (76 spaces) and areas for loading, unloading and storage of plant and materials would all be located within a construction compound area. This area would be located inside the site, towards the southeast corner of the development. The

construction compound area is shown as on the site Compound & Material Storage Layout plan below which is attached as appendix A to the CMS.



Compound & Material Storage Layout Plan (Appendix A of the CMS)

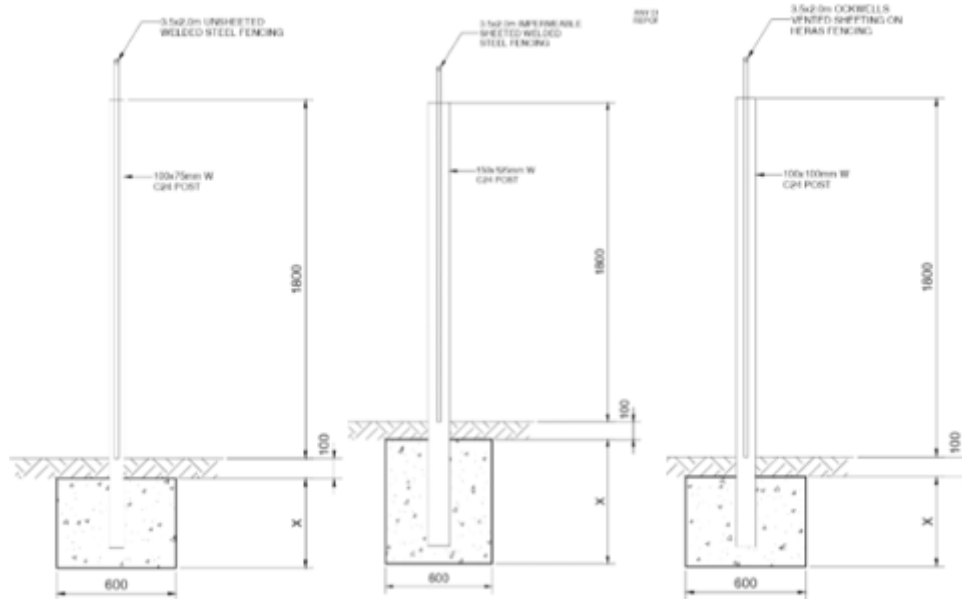
- 5.7 RBC Transport Officers are satisfied that there is space for all vehicles to access and egress the site in forward gear and that sufficient operative and visitor parking spaces are provided. The CMS states that no vehicles will be permitted to reverse into, or out of the site. Given the size of the site there is sufficient space for all vehicles to turn within the site .
- 5.8 The construction phase parking spaces, materials and plant loading, unloading and storage areas would be located 12m at the nearest point from the southern site boundary with the garden areas of the residential dwellings to the south at Brindles and Lyefield Court and 28m from the closest dwelling. This separation is considered sufficient to prevent any undue disturbance to these existing residents when considered together with the noise and dust control measures discussed elsewhere in the CMS and later on in this report.
- 5.9 When the dwellings where the material storage and loading/unloading compounds are proposed to be located are being constructed then the parking and loading/unloading areas will occupy the remaining visitor parking bays in areas where construction is still commencing.
- 5.10 The staff welfare facilities (toilets, drying room, canteen) and site offices are proposed to be located on the pre-formed foundation of plots no. 46-49. This area is directly adjacent to the visitor and staff parking area and areas for

loading, unloading and storage of plant and materials. The welfare facilities and offices would consist of two storey cabins.

- 5.11 The cabins would be located 15m from the southern boundary of the site with Emmer Green Primary School Playing Fields which is considered sufficient to prevent any undue disturbance to the school. The site welfare facilities would also be located over 50m from the closest existing residential dwellings on Gorselands to the southwest of the site.
- 5.12 The Council's Natural Environment Officer is satisfied that the construction phase visitor parking areas for plant and materials and site welfare facilities are located such that they would not impact upon the canopies or rooting areas of retained trees and no specific protection measures are recommended
- 5.13 As the construction programme reaches the area of the site to be used for operative and visitor parking areas and plant and materials storage requirements reduce in size. These areas will then transfer to other areas within the site, occupying visitor parking bays in areas where construction is still commencing or in the garden and drives of plots yet to be completed. Similarly, the welfare facilities will transfer to an oasis unit located in the visitor bays opposite plots no. 26-29. The above is considered to have overcome reasons for refusal a, b and c of the decision to refuse the previous application for approval of the CMS (ref. 220958) referred to under paragraph 2.3 of this report.
- 5.14 The CMS confirms that no parking associated with the development will occur on the public highway at any time to ensure there is no impact on the surrounding residential roads.
- 5.15 The proposed staff and visitor parking areas for the construction site and areas for loading, unloading and storage of materials are considered to comply with Policy TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters) in that they would provide for suitable off-street servicing and as such would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the local transport network or highway safety.

d) The erection and maintenance of security hoarding

- 5.16 Security fencing will be located around the perimeter of the site. This will generally take the form of secure 'Heras' fencing. Where this fencing faces existing housing, it will have vented sheeting attached to it as to provide a visual screen. Drawings of the Heras fencing line / locations are shown below and are attached as appendix D of the CMS.



Secure Heras Fencing (Appendix D of the CMS)

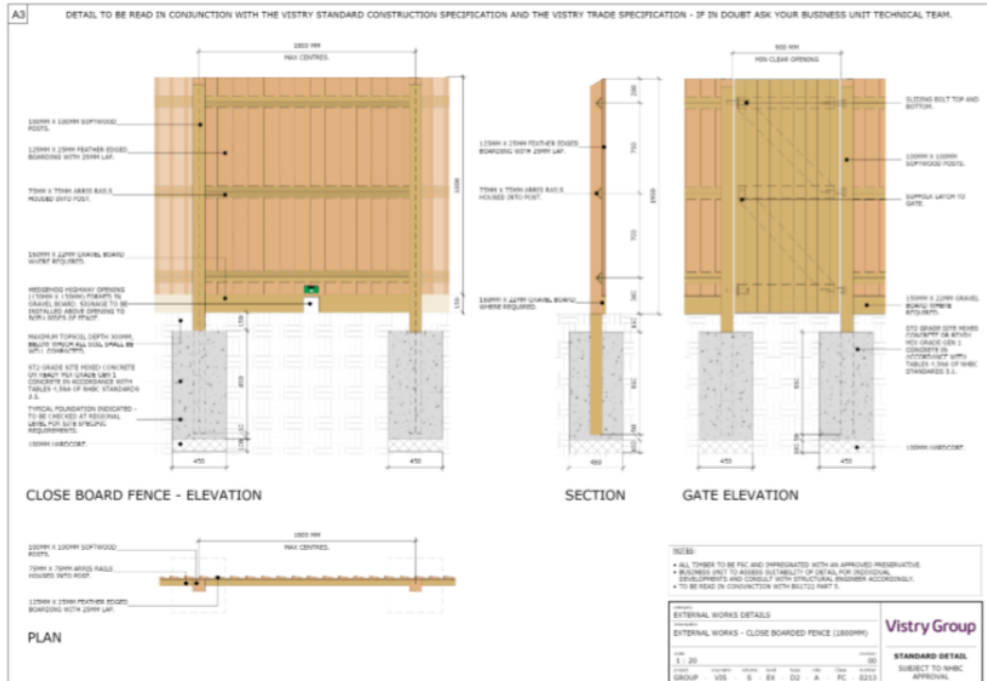
5.17 This fencing will initially surround the whole site but will move back in line with construction progress as noted on “Site Segregation Plan” shown below which is attached as appendix I to the CMS. The site segregation plans will also ensure that the fencing is in place to provide protection for new residents from construction works as the site becomes occupied.



Site Segregation Plan (Appendix I of the CMS)

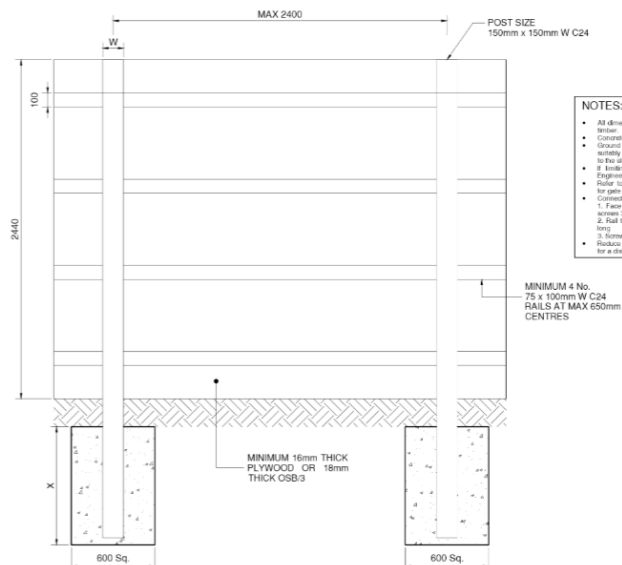
5.18 In places, where tree protection fencing is required (in accordance with the Arboricultural Method Statement (AMS) details under condition no. 17 of the outline planning permission) tree protection fencing will be used as the secure boundary to avoid additional works being undertaken around protected trees. The AMS is attached as Appendix N to the CMS.

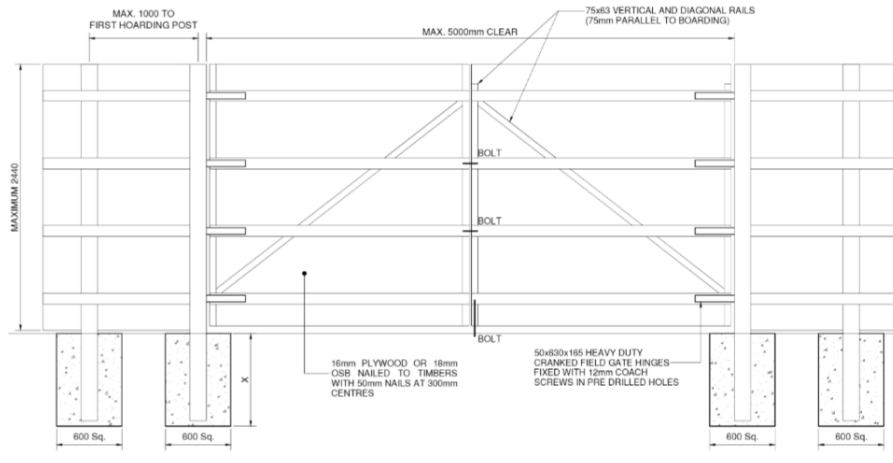
5.19 Fencing around the staff and visitor car parking, loading, unloading and storage of materials and welfare compounds inside the construction site will take the form of 1.8m closed board timber fencing. This fencing is shown on the plan below which is attached as appendix C to the CMS.



Closed Board Timber Fencing Plan (Appendix C of the CMS)

5.20 To the front of the site, along Kidmore End Road, hoarding will be used to secure the site perimeter which will also display marketing images of the development. Hoarding will also be used to form the gates to the site entrance from Kidmore End Road. The hoarding will be a maximum of 2.4m in height. Details of the hoarding is shown below and is attached as appendix E to the CMS. RBC Transport Officers are satisfied with the proposed gates which would open inwards into the site and away from the public highway.





Site Hoarding (Appendix E of the CMS)

5.21 The Council’s Natural Environment Officer is content with the construction fencing proposals which would be carried out in line with the AMS requirements. However, the Officer has raised a concern that some of the future locations for construction fencing/hoarding showing on the Site Segregation Plan (Appendix I of the CMS), which shows how the fencing and hoarding would be re-sited as construction of the different parts of the development progresses, would conflict with the agreed locations for tree protection fencing. Further information on this matter will be provided in an update report.

5.22 The CMS sets out that maintenance of all site fencing and hoarding would be the responsibility of the Site Manager who will carry out weekly inspections of the site perimeter and respond to any issues raised regarding the condition of the fencing / hoarding, including any issues raised by local residents.

e) Wheel washing facilities

f) Measures on-site to control the deposition of dirt/mud on surrounding roads during demolition and construction

5.23 The CMS states that wheel washing facilities will be provided on site through the duration of the development demolition and construction works. The initial location of the wheel washing facilities is at the site entrance from Kidmore End Road and is shown as the thick light blue line on the demolition plan above which is attached as appendix B to the CMS.

5.24 The CMS goes on to state that the wheel washing facilities will gradually move back along the new spine road of the development as more plots are completed as shown by the small red circles on the site segregation plan above which is attached as appendix I to the CMS.

5.25 The CMS also confirms that the Principal Contractor will regularly monitor the on-site roads and the section of Kidmore End Road outside of the entrance for dirt and debris and will arrange for road sweeps on the public highway when necessary. To prevent debris spillage, lorries carrying loose materials will be

covered before leaving the site and material will also be damped down beforehand if necessary. RBC Transport Officers are satisfied with the wheel washing proposal and other measures proposed to control deposition of dirt/mud on surrounding roads.

- 5.26 The proposed measures to control deposition of dirt/mud on roads are considered to comply with Policy TR3 (Access, Traffic and Highway Related Matters) and would ensure that dirt/mud associated with the development would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the local transport network.

g) Measures for controlling the use of site lighting whether required for safe working or for security purposes

- 5.27 The CMS sets out that temporary site lighting will be required during winter months to provide safe access and working conditions for those working on and visiting the site. It is proposed that lighting would be task-specific where appropriate and would be switched off at the end of each working day. Lighting will primarily be focussed around the site compound areas.

- 5.28 The CMS confirms that construction lighting will adhere to the following principles issued by the Bat Conservation Trust:

- No 'upward pointing' or bare bulb lights will be installed anywhere on the development.
- All external lights will not be more than 3.5 metres in height and will have shields installed to focus light towards construction areas only. No light will be allowed to emit light past horizontal (90 degrees from the ground).
- 'No-light zones' will be observed, to protect the boundaries of the site from any artificial light. No artificial lighting shall be positioned within 15 metres of these boundaries and no lights shall be positioned to face towards these boundaries.
- All external lighting shall be on motion sensors and timers.

- 5.29 The above principles align with those set out in the submitted Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP) for the development which details the mitigation measures proposed to minimise the impacts of the construction of the development on wildlife. Submission and approval of the CEMP is required under condition 20 of the outline planning permission. A CEMP has been submitted for consideration under the variation of condition application ref. 221312VAR which is under consideration as Item 13 on the agenda and is considered to be acceptable by the Local Planning Authority's Ecology Adviser.

- 5.30 The above principles are also considered sufficient to ensure the lighting would not result in significant glare or spill and adversely impact on existing surrounding residential properties. Notably no lighting would be located within 15m of the site boundaries with cowls (shields) attached to all lights/columns which would not exceed 3.5m in height. All lighting would also be turned off at

the end of each day with construction hours limited to 1800hours on Mondays and Fridays.

- 5.31 The proposals are considered to satisfactorily demonstrate that the temporary site lighting would not adversely impact on biodiversity in accordance with Policy EN12 nor the amenity of surrounding residential occupiers in accordance with Policies CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity) and EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources).

h) Method of any piling;

- 5.32 The CMS states that piled foundations will be utilised as part of the development. Continuous flight auger (CFA) piles are proposed to be used within the development which are drilled and concreted in one continuous operation enabling much faster installation time than for standard bored piles and minimising associated vibrations. The CMS and associated AMS confirm that no piling would take place within the root protection areas (RPAs) of retained trees. It is stated that in locations where piling is required close to RPAs, piling rig access will be from within the structure footprint and therefore from outside of the RPAs. The AMS also details foundation specifications for dwellings close to RPAs which will be adhered to. The Council's Natural Environment Officer does not object to the method of piling proposed.

- 5.33 The proposals are considered to demonstrate that the piling proposed as part of the development would not result in the adverse impact on retained trees in accordance with Policy EN14 (Trees, Hedges and Woodlands).

- 5.34 Noise, vibration and dust matters are discussed under sections m, n and o of the CMS.

i) Footpath Closures/Road Closures needed during demolition and construction;

- 5.35 The CMS sets out that (aside from highway improvement works secured under associated section 278 and 106 agreements) all demolition and construction activities will take place within the boundary of the site. There is also no public access to or across the existing site, and as such, RBC Transport Officers are satisfied that no temporary footpath closures are required.

- 5.36 Any pavement closures required as a result of associated off-site highway works will be agreed through the separate section 278 highway works process with the Highways Authority.

- 5.37 Subject to the construction and demolition of the development being carried out in accordance with the CMS, it is not considered that the works would have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the highway network in terms of pavement or road closures.

j) Traffic Management needed during demolition and construction;

k) Times, routes and means of access into and from the site for demolition and construction traffic and delivery vehicles

- 5.38 RBC Transport Officers are satisfied that there is sufficient space within the development site to turn vehicles on-site and that all vehicles will be able to access and egress the site in forward gear. The CMS is clear that no vehicles will be permitted to reverse into, or out of, the site.
- 5.39 Within the construction site there will be protected 'operative walkways' which will be physically separated from construction roads using traffic barriers. There will be designated crossing points where operatives will have a 'right of way' over construction vehicles.
- 5.40 It is stated that all loading and unloading from delivery vehicles and construction traffic (including building materials, finished or unfinished products, parts, crates, packing materials and waste) will take place inside the site material compounds only and that the roads outside the site will be kept clear at all times with clear access for fire appliances and emergency services.
- 5.41 It is also set out that the developer will liaise with Emmer Green Primary School to offer a member of the construction team or an external trainer to visit and brief the school children on the dangers of construction sites and construction traffic.
- 5.42 All site operatives will be encouraged to share cars and utilise public transport where possible as a measure to keep associated traffic volumes to a minimum.
- 5.43 RBC Transport Officers are satisfied that the proposed permitted delivery times will avoid peak traffic hours to avoid congestion within the town and residential areas. Deliveries will be scheduled to arrive outside of the hours 08:00-09:30, 14:45-15:30 and 17:00-18:00 during school terms times to avoid times when children are most likely to be walking past the site to school. The CMS states the developer has liaised with Emmer Green School prior to proposing these delivery time restrictions.
- 5.44 The CMS sets out that the developer will enforce these hours by noting on delivery tickets to the suppliers, orders and the site rules and restrictions that deliveries should be conducted outside of the above hours. The CMS goes on to state that in the event that any deliveries arrive at site prior to works commencing at 0800, delivery vehicles will be permitted entry to the site to avoid any disruption to local roads, however no unloading or loading will be permitted to take place until work commencement at 0800, and any idling HGVs will be instructed to have their engines switched off. All deliveries and removal of waste will be planned for within the approved working hours. Transport Officers are satisfied with this arrangement.
- 5.45 The CMS proposes a construction traffic route from Junction 11 of the M4 to the site using the Classified road network for as long as possible. However, given

the site's location, all HGV and plant deliveries will have to be routed along Kidmore End Road which cannot accommodate two-way vehicle movements along some sections of the road. At the request of RBC Transport Officers, the CMS states that prior to commencement of demolition or construction activities, the developer will contact RBC Transport Development Control/Streetworks team to determine where a Temporary Traffic Regulation Order (TTRO) can be implemented to provide a passing location along Kidmore End Road and that the developer will submit the TTRO application and cover the cost of any associated legal costs and costs for carrying out implementation of the TTRO via the standard TTRO process. RBC Transport Officers consider that this TTRO is required in order to provide suitable access arrangement for construction vehicles along Kidmore End Road.

- 5.46 The TTRO works are likely to entail the introduction of waiting restrictions (such as a single or double yellow line) for a short stretch to break up the length of on-street parking to facilitate a passing place along Kidmore End Road. Transport Officers do not anticipate that this would significantly impact the availability of on-street parking for the local residents as the restrictions would be introduced where there are existing breaks for driveway access.
- 5.47 The transport route between junction 11 of the M4 and Kidmore End Road also has limited suitable 'holding points' for heavy goods vehicles. The CMS states that suppliers delivering to the site will be required to determine a suitable holding point themselves based on the size and load of their consignment should their expected arrival time coincide with the restricted delivery times included in the CMS. In the unlikely event that a delivery arrives outside of the agreed scheduled hours (such as if it is delayed in traffic on the way to site), it will be ensured that a banksman is available to navigate deliveries into the site safely. Banksmen are trained to direct vehicle movements on or around site and they will remain in situ at the entrance to the site during working hours. This approach is considered acceptable by RBC Transport Officers.
- 5.48 It is also proposed that additional safety measures will be ensured through traffic and highway safety signage outside of the local schools; approval for which will be sought from the Highway Authority and the developer will maintain dialogue with Emmer Green Primary to monitor the situation and respond accordingly.
- 5.49 The CMS also sets out the estimated number of daily deliveries to the site during the demolition and construction of the development. Based on similar sized developments the developer estimates that, on average, there will be between 20-30 deliveries per day but that this number will vary based on the stage of build being undertaken with groundworks invariably producing greater levels of movement of materials on and off site. On days when higher number of deliveries are required, the developer will seek to work with suppliers to stagger the deliveries to reduce the number of vehicles on surrounding roads at one time. RBC Transport Officers are satisfied that this estimation is reasonable and that the traffic and access management measures proposed are suitable for the likely number of deliveries.

5.50 Subject to the development being undertaken in accordance with the traffic and access management requirements of the CMS it is considered that the development can be managed in manner which would not have a material detrimental impact on the functioning of the transport network or highway safety in accordance with Policy TR3.

L) A commitment to regular meetings with the Council's Streetworks Co-ordinator

5.51 The CMS confirms that once appointed, the Site Manager will contact the Borough Council's Street Works Co-ordinator and offer to meet them prior to any works starting on site and make themselves available for regular meetings at regular intervals, the frequency of which is to be agreed between both parties.


M) A dust mitigation and monitoring scheme during demolition and construction

5.52 RBC Environmental Protection Officers are satisfied that the CMS demonstrates that potential dust impacts of the demolition and construction of the development have been appropriately considered and that suitable mitigation measures are proposed.

5.53 It is likely that demolition and construction activities will generate dust when there are dry and windy conditions at the site, particularly during activities involving earthworks.

5.54 Dust levels would be monitored and recorded, and water suppression shall be used for dampening down when deemed necessary by the site manager.

5.55 Dust mitigation measures proposed within the CMS include damping down of loose materials on lorries and covering of open backed lorries moving in and around the site. Operatives at the site will carry out the development in accordance with the following dust control principles:

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Keep surfaces swept and damp down with water at regular intervals ✓ Minimise drop heights into haulage vehicles and into conveyors ✓ Ensure cutting and grinding operations are adequately shielded or wetted ✓ Sheet lorries carrying dry materials off site ✓ Keep to site speed limits to minimise dust ✓ Use of wheel wash, for appropriate vehicles, if one is provided on site ✓ Store fine, dry materials within buildings or provide adequate protection from the wind ✓ Store bulk cement and bentonite in silos ✓ Position silos and stockpiles away from residential areas or watercourses ✓ Clean up or damp down any spillage of dry dusty materials ✓ Notify your Line Manager if work activities are causing poor air quality 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ DON'T burn materials on site without approval from your Project Manager. Permission is required first from the Environment Agency / Natural Resources Wales / Scottish Environment Protection Agency ✗ DON'T use poorly maintained plant. Black smoke may give rise to poor health and can cause a nuisance ✗ DON'T leave plant running if not in use ✗ DON'T ignore sources of poor air quality, notify your line manager ✗ DON'T ignore complaints. 

5.56 As required by RBC Environmental Protection Officers, the CMS also states that any dust impacts of the demolition and construction process would be managed in accordance with Institute of Air Quality Management (IAQM) 2004 guidance with the following specific stipulations:

Communication

- Develop and implement a stakeholder communications plan;
- Display the name and contact details of persons accountable on the site boundary; and
- Display the head or regional office information on the site boundary.

Management

- Develop and implement a Dust Management Plan (DMP) which will be agreed with the EHO [Environmental Protection Team] prior to demolition.
- Record all dust and air quality complaints, identify causes and take measures to reduce emissions;
- Record exceptional incidents and action taken to resolve the situation;
- Carry out regular site inspections to monitor compliance with the DMP and record results;
- Increase site inspection frequency during prolonged dry or windy conditions and when activities with high dust potential are being undertaken;
- Agree dust monitoring locations with the local authority and instigate monitoring in advance of works commencing in the area in order to achieve a base line;
- Plan site layout so that machinery and dust causing activities are located away from receptors, as far as possible;
- Erect solid screens or barriers around dusty activities or the site boundary at least as high as any stockpile on site;
- Fully enclose Site or specific operations where there is a high potential for dust production and the Site is active for an extensive period;

- Avoid site run off of water or mud;
- Keep site fencing, barriers and scaffolding clean using wet methods;
- Remove potentially dusty materials from Site as soon as possible;
- Cover, seed or fence stockpiles to prevent wind whipping;
- Ensure all vehicles switch off engines when stationary;
- Avoid the use of diesel or petrol powered generators where possible;
- Produce a Construction Logistics Plan (CLP) to manage the delivery of goods and materials;
- Only use cutting, grinding and sawing equipment with dust suppression equipment;
- Ensure an adequate supply of water on-site for dust suppression;
- Use enclosed chutes and conveyors and covered skips;
- Minimise drop heights from conveyors, loading shovels, hoppers and other loading or handling equipment and use water sprays on such equipment where appropriate;
- Ensure equipment is readily available on-site to clean up spillages of dry materials; and
- No on-site bonfires and burning of waste materials on-site.

Demolition

- Incorporate 'soft-strip' inside buildings before demolition (retaining walls and windows in the rest of the building where possible, to provide a screen against dust);
- Ensure water suppression is used during demolition operation;
- Avoid explosive blasting, using appropriate manual and mechanical alternatives; and
- Bag and remove any biological debris or damp down such material before demolition.

Earthworks

- Re-vegetate earthworks and exposed areas /soil stockpiles to stabilise surfaces as soon as practicable; and
- Only remove the cover in small areas during work and not all at once

Construction

- Ensure sand and other aggregates are stored in bunded areas and are not allowed to dry out, unless required for a particular process; and
- Ensure bulk cement and other fine powder materials are delivered in enclosed tankers and stored silos with suitable emissions control systems.

Trackout

- Use water assisted dust sweepers on the Site access and local roads;
- Avoid dry sweeping of large areas;
- Ensure vehicles entering and leaving the Site are covered to prevent escape of materials;
- Record inspection of on-site haul routes and any subsequent action, repairing as soon as reasonably practicable;
- Install hard surfaced haul routes which are regularly damped down;

- Install a wheel wash with a hard-surfaced road to the Site exit where site layout permits; and
 - The Site access gate to be located at least 10 m from receptors where possible.
- 5.57 Notably, the developer is required to agree a site-specific dust management plan with RBC Environmental Protection Officers prior to any demolition or construction work commencing.
- 5.58 The CMS also confirms that dust monitors recording PM10 particles will also be installed at two locations on the site boundary with residential receptors. As set out above the exact location for the dust monitors will be agreed with RBC Environmental Protection Officers prior to any demolition or construction work commencing with the locations to be agreed prior to each phase of the development. The monitors will alert site operatives to elevated dust levels in real time. In the event of an exceedance of dust beyond levels agreed with RBC Environmental Protection Officers, works on site will stop and measures will be identified and applied to reduce or mitigate the dust impact.
- 5.59 Subject to the development being undertaken in accordance with the dust management requirements of the CMS, it is considered that the development can be managed in manner which would not have a material detrimental impact on the surrounding occupier and the environment in terms of dust in accordance with Policies EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) and CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity).
- 5.60 The above is considered to have overcome reasons for refusal d and e of the decision to refuse the previous application for approval of the CMS (ref. 220958) referred to under paragraph 2.3 of this report.
- N) Measures to control noise including controls on timing of operations (to include quiet periods)**
- O) Provisions to be made for the control of vibrations coming from the site during demolition and construction**
- 5.61 RBC Environmental Protection Officers are satisfied that the submitted CMS demonstrates that potential noise and vibration impacts of the demolition and construction of the development have been appropriately considered and that suitable mitigation measures are proposed.
- 5.62 As required by condition 30 of the outline planning permission, demolition and construction activities associated with the development will take place between the hours of 0800 to 1800 Mondays to Fridays and 0800 to 1300 hours on Saturdays and not at any time on Sundays and Bank or Statutory Holidays without prior written approval from the Local Planning Authority.
- 5.63 The CMS states that all demolition and construction related activities on site will be assessed for by the site manager for anticipated noise levels prior to

works commencing and taking into account the potential for amplification of noise due to the layout of the site and proximity to neighbours. It is also stated that staff at the site will carry out the development in accordance with the following noise and vibration control principles:

DO	DON'T
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ ADHERE TO WORKING HOURS. Some sites are only allowed to work at certain times ✓ NOTIFY the Local Authority IN ADVANCE of any planned noisy works that need to be conducted outside permitted working hours ✓ Plan deliveries. Arrange routes and times to minimise potential nuisance to the local community ✓ Keep noisy plant away from public areas ✓ Minimise drop heights into hoppers, lorries and other plant ✓ Use local screening where necessary. Noise can be reduced if a screen is placed between plant and nearby sensitive locations e.g. houses. Screens can be straw bales or plyboard ✓ Use silenced generators and tower lights ✓ Keep acoustic doors and hoods on plant closed – it does make a difference! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✗ DON'T undertake noisy works during the evening, at night or very early in the morning if it can be avoided! ✗ DON'T leave doors and hoods open on plant ✗ DON'T leave plant running unnecessarily ✗ DON'T use poorly maintained plant ✗ DON'T ignore complaints from the local community ✗ DON'T undertake activities that could cause damage to nearby structures through vibration unless approved by your line manager.

- 5.64 Continuous flight auger (CFA) piles are proposed to be used within the development which are drilled and concreted in one continuous operation enabling much faster installation time than for standard bored piles and minimising associated vibrations.
- 5.65 The CMS wording stipulates that the developer will apply for a separate Section 61 consent under the Control of Pollution Act 1990 in order to ensure that noise and vibration emissions from the demolition and construction activities associated with the development are kept to acceptable levels. Once the Section 61 consent is approved the developer would then be legally bound to comply with its terms. The CMS goes on to confirm that the S61 application will include calculations of likely demolition and construction impact level at neighbouring (receptor) properties carried out in accordance with the relevant British Standard guidelines (ref. BS 5228:2009) and the Code of Practice for Noise and Vibration Control on Construction and Open Sites (ref. A1:2014).
- 5.66 The CMS also sets out that throughout the demolition and construction activities, noise monitoring will be undertaken at two nearby residential properties (to be agreed as part of the Section 61 consent application). The monitoring will commence with baseline noise surveys prior to the start of the works (of a week in duration each). This data, together with the construction noise predictions, will be used to derive project noise limits. The noise monitoring will log noise levels in real-time and will alert site staff immediately in the event of exceedances (or near exceedances of the limits). In the event of an exceedance, works will stop, and an investigation undertaken to determine if the works may be undertaken using alternative methodology to reduce the noise impact accordingly. As with the dust monitoring, the exact

location of the noise monitors will be reviewed prior to each phase of the development beginning.

5.67 Subject to the development being undertaken in accordance with the noise and vibration management requirements of the CMS it is considered that the development can be managed in manner which would not have a material detrimental impact on the surrounding occupier and the environment in terms of noise and vibration in accordance with Policies EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources), EN17 (Noise Generating Equipment) and CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity).

5.68 The above is considered to have overcome reasons for refusal d and e of the decision to refuse the previous application for approval of the CMS (ref. 220958) referred to under paragraph 2.3 of this report.

P) Temporary external lighting relating to demolition and construction works

5.69 This is covered under part g) of the CMS discussed above.

Q) A scheme for recycling/disposing of waste resulting from the demolition and construction works

5.70 The CMS confirms that hazardous materials discovered during demolition (e.g. asbestos) will be removed from site by a specialist contractor and disposed of in line with National requirements.

5.71 It is stated that where possible, non-hazardous materials resulting from on-site demolition will be sorted and used as hardcore in the base of the site compound and site parking areas. During construction, all waste produced on site will be sorted into separate waste streams and recycled where possible, such as for use in providing the culverted crossings over the drainage attenuating swales within the development.

5.72 It is proposed that a coloured skip system will be used for all trades on site to sort waste into the appropriate streams. The skips will be located within the site materials storage area (as shown on the "Site Compound Plan - Rev B" located at Appendix A) and their correct use monitored by the site manager.

5.73 The proposals are considered to make sufficient provision for waste minimisation in accordance with Local Plan Policy CC5 (Waste Minimisation and Storage) which requires that developments demonstrate measures to minimise the generation of waste in construction and promote more sustainable approaches to waste management, including the reuse and recycling of construction waste and the promotion of layouts and designs that provide adequate, well-designed space to facilitate waste storage, reuse, recycling and composting.

R) Measures to control exposure to contaminated land

5.74 The CMS confirms that the demolition and construction activities will be undertaken in full accordance with the Contamination Remediation Strategy for the development which has been approved and agreed with Environmental Protection Officers under condition 26 of the outline planning permission (agreed as part of approval of details reserved by condition application ref. 220958 on 4th January 2023).

5.75 On this basis, the proposals are considered to demonstrate compliance with Policy EN16 (Pollution and Water Resources) which require that where identified, contamination is managed or remediated to ensure that it will not impact on the wider environment during development demolition and construction activities.

S) Full details of pest control measures following any demolition required. Where necessary, capping of drains/sewers and baiting arrangements

5.76 The CMS sets out that pest control on the construction site will be monitored by the site manager and if necessary, specialist contractors used. The on-site canteen area will provide a fridge to allow those working on the site to store food for that day safely however, there will be a sign stating that this should be emptied at the end of each day, and no food will be stored on site overnight. Waste is regularly removed from the site and not allowed to build up. Due to the separation of waste streams in the coloured skip system, general site waste should not be contaminated with food waste and therefore pests will not be attracted to these skips.

T) Contact details and a “helpline” number should be provided so that problems can be reported and dealt with swiftly

5.77 The CMS confirms that once a site manager has been assigned to the site, the contact details for them and the assistant site manager will be displayed at the entrance to the site to allow any issues to be reported and dealt with by them directly.

6 Conclusion

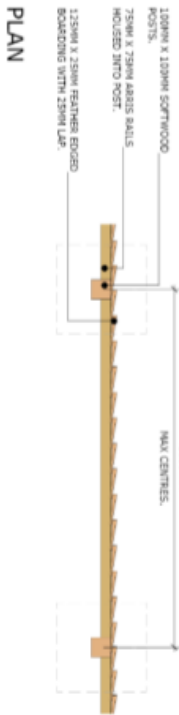
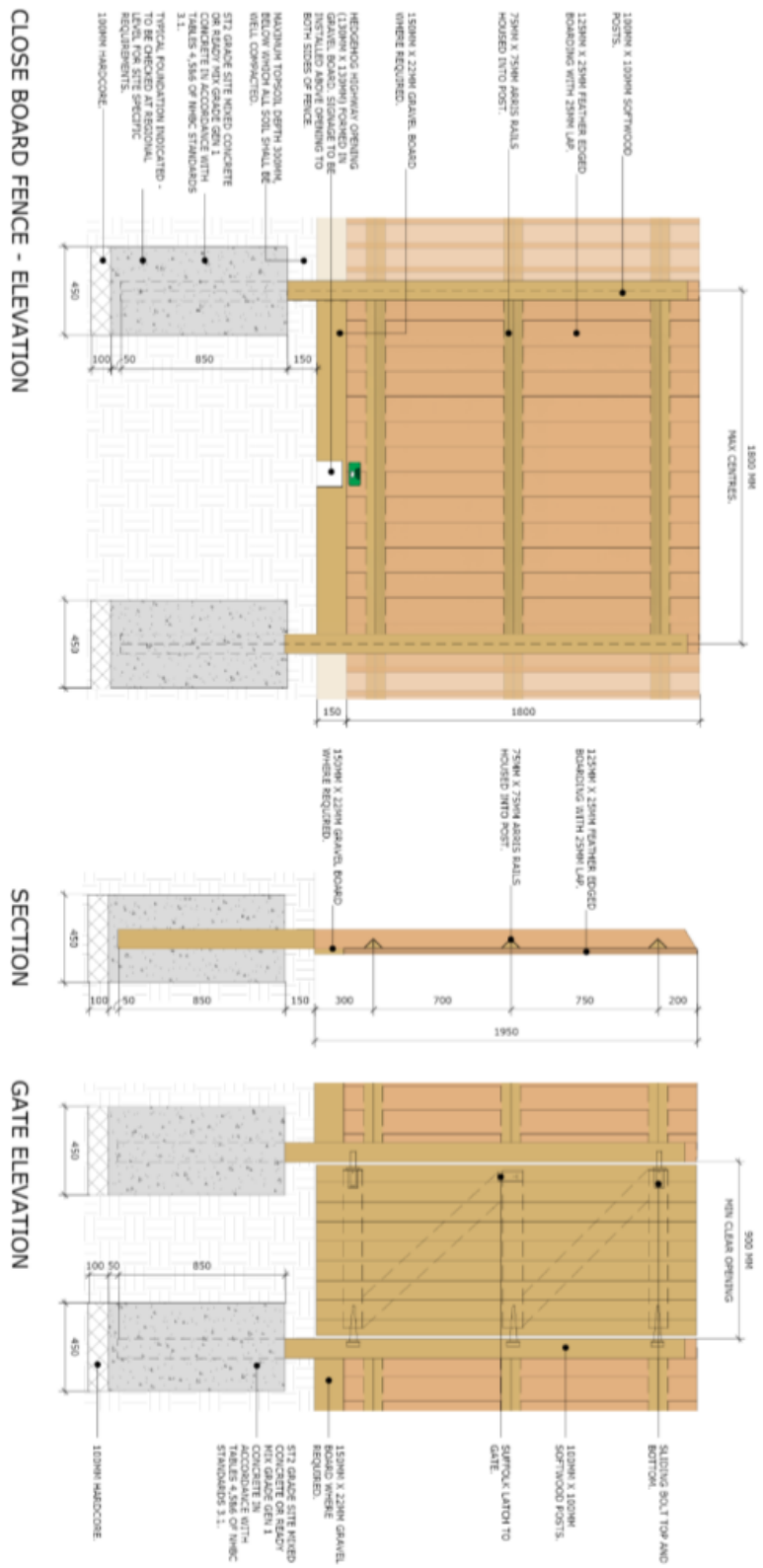
6.1 The submitted Construction Method Statement is considered to acceptably demonstrate measures that would ensure the demolition and construction of the development can be carried out in a manner which would satisfactorily protect the amenities of neighbouring residents, the surrounding natural environment and ensure that there would not be material detrimental impacts on the functioning of the transport network and highway safety in accordance with the relevant Policies of the Reading Borough Local Plan 2019 set out above.

6.2 The officer recommendation is to approve the CMS and associated appendices for the purposes of condition no. 29 of outline planning permission ref. 211843.

Case Officer: Mr Matt Burns
Plans and Drawings:



Appendix B - Demolition Compound Plan



NOTES:

- ALL THINGS TO BE FIC AND DISREGARD WITH AN APPROVED PRESERVATIVE.
- BUSINESS UNIT TO ASSESS SUITABILITY OF DETAIL FOR INDIVIDUAL DEFERMENTS AND CONSULT WITH STRUCTURAL ENGINEER ACCORDINGLY.
- TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH BS1722 PART 2.

EXTERNAL WORKS DETAILS		Vistry Group	
EXTERNAL WORKS - CLOSE BOARDED FENCE (1800MM)		STANDARD DETAIL	
Scale	1 : 20	Project	00
Author	MS	Checked	MS
Group	VIS - 5 - EX - D2 - A - FC - 0213	Approved	MS
		SUBJECT TO NHBC APPROVAL	

Do not scale from this drawing. Use written dimensions only. Any discrepancy or suggested modification is to be reported to Vistry Group Plc. © Vistry Group Plc.

Health & Safety Information Key:

	HSS-INFO
	HSS-PREVENT
	HSS-WARN
	HSS-ACTION

- NOTES:**
- All dimensions are in mm.
 - If limiting dimensions are exceeded or if ground is poor refer to the Engineer.
 - Assumed Ground Bearing Capacity of 75kN/m².

GENERAL NOTES

NO DIMENSIONS TO BE SCALED OFF THIS DRAWING.

THIS DRAWING IS TO BE READ IN CONJUNCTION WITH ALL RELEVANT ARCHITECT'S AND ENGINEER'S DRAWINGS.

ALL DIMENSIONS ARE IN MILLIMETRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.

ALL LEVELS ARE IN METRES UNLESS NOTED OTHERWISE.

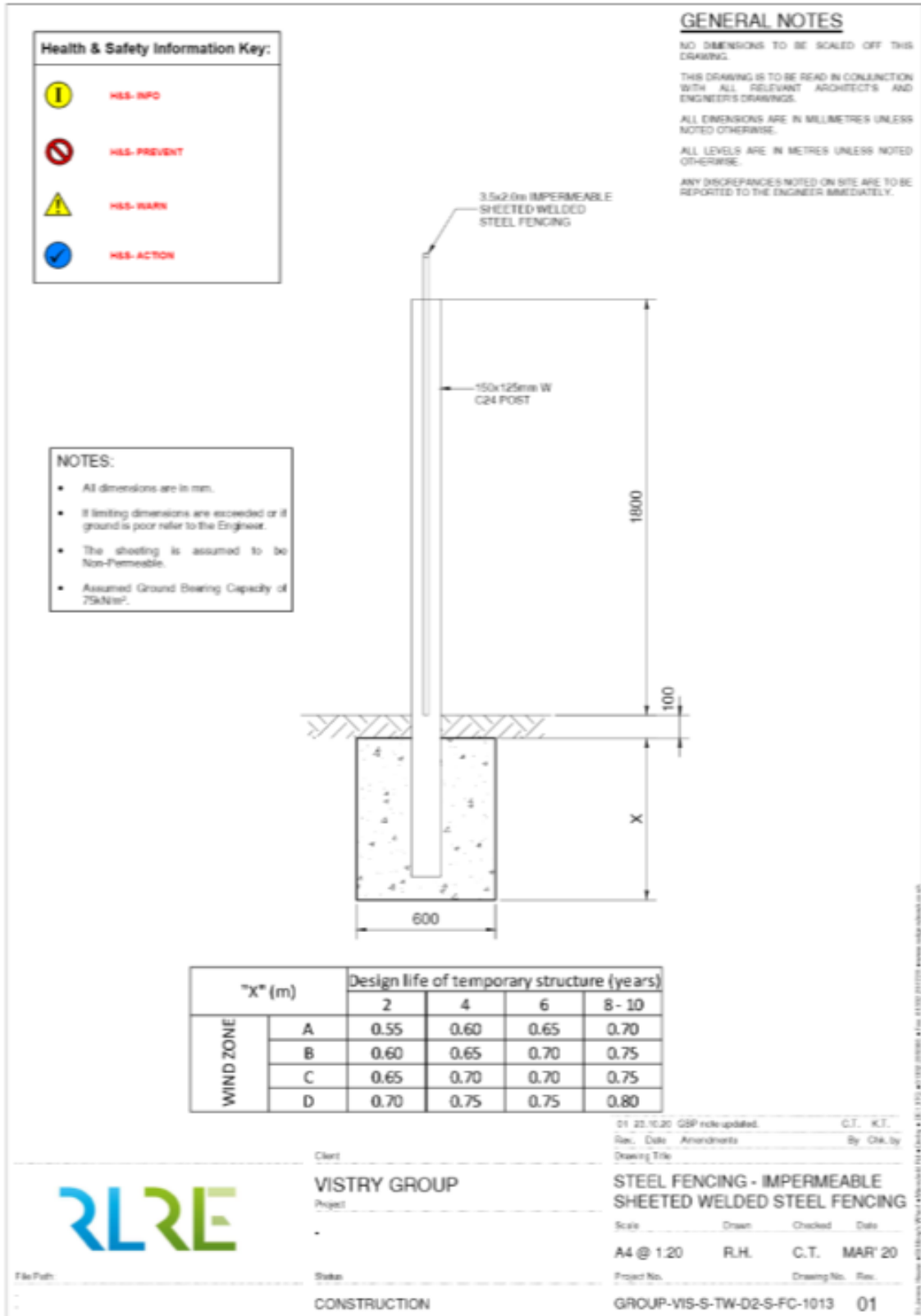
ANY DISCREPANCIES NOTED ON SITE ARE TO BE REPORTED TO THE ENGINEER IMMEDIATELY.



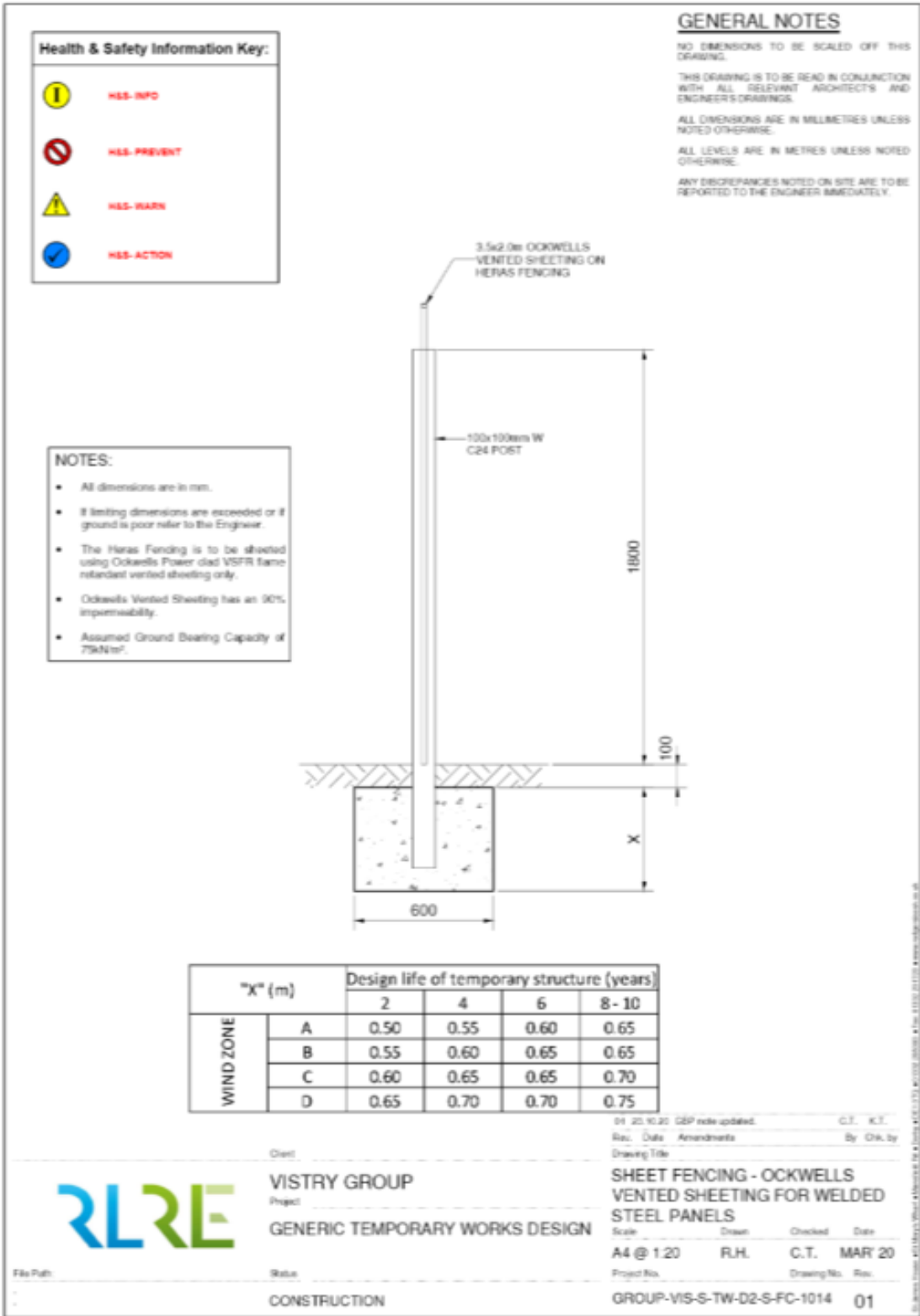
"X" (m)	Design life of temporary structure (years)			
	2	4	6	8 - 10
WIND ZONE A	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.40
WIND ZONE B	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.45
WIND ZONE C	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.50
WIND ZONE D	0.40	0.45	0.50	0.50

	Client	VISTRY GROUP	01 20 10 20 GSP note updated	C.T. K.T.
	Project	GENERIC TEMPORARY WORKS DESIGN	Rev. Date Amendments	By Chk. by
File Path	Rate	CONSTRUCTION	Drawing Title	STEEL FENCING - UNSHEETED WELDED STEEL FENCING
			Scale	Drawn
			A4 @ 1:20	R.H.
			Checked	C.T.
			Project No.	MAR '20
			Drawing No.	01

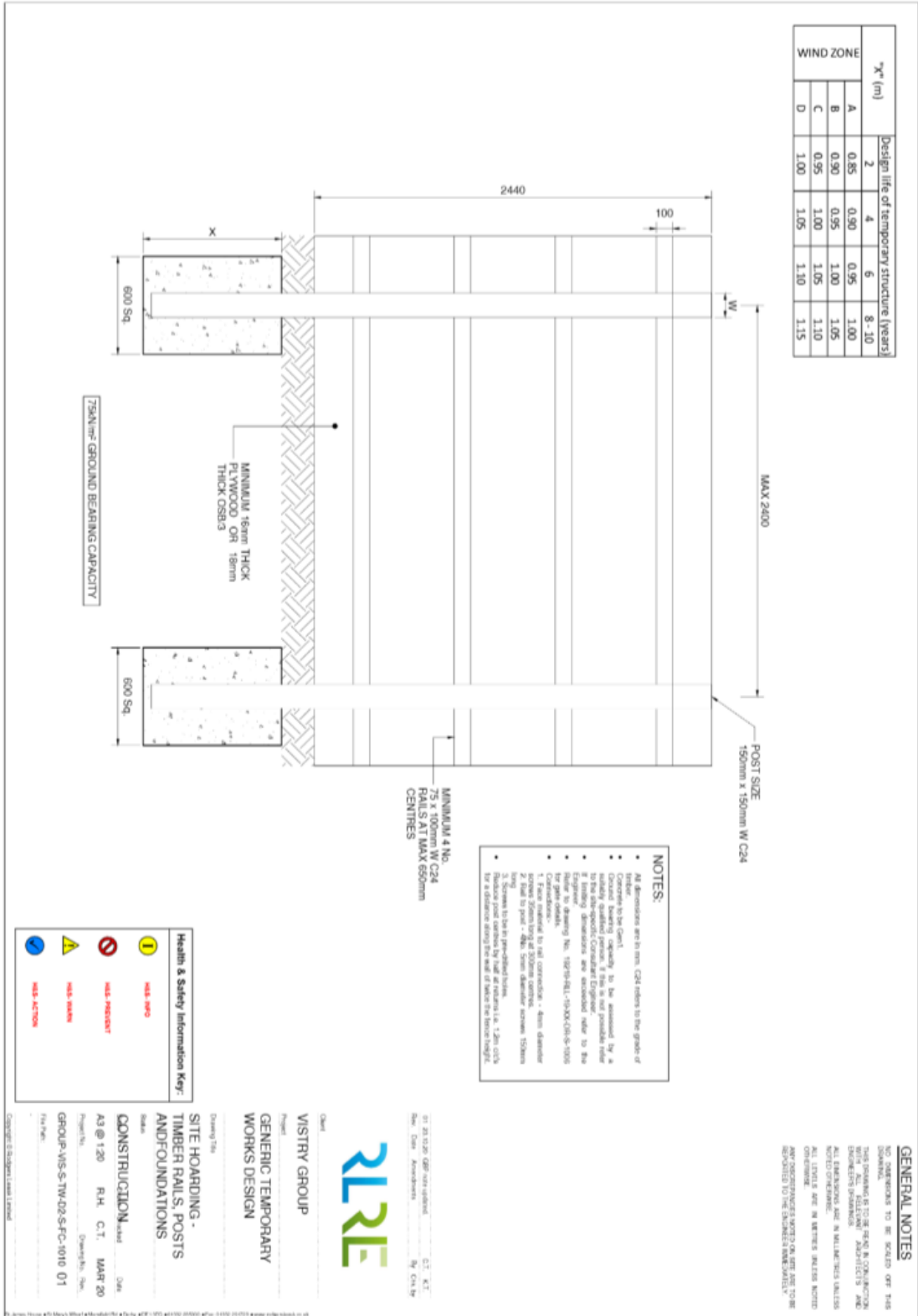
Appendix D - Steel Fencing - Un-sheeted



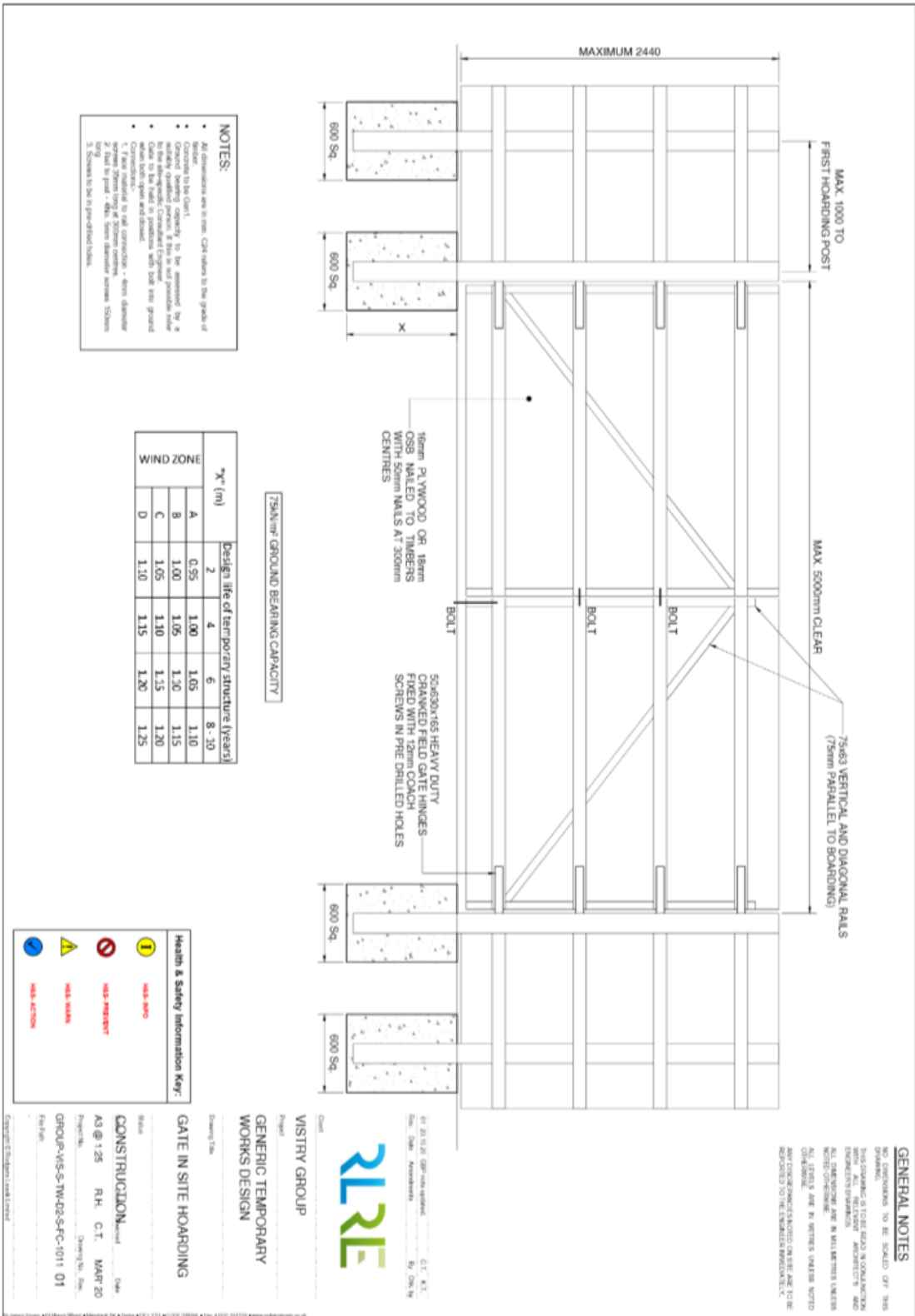
Appendix D - Steel Fencing - Impermeable Sheeting



Appendix D - Steel Fencing - Vented



Appendix E - Hoarding



Appendix E - Gate in Site Hoarding

Section A



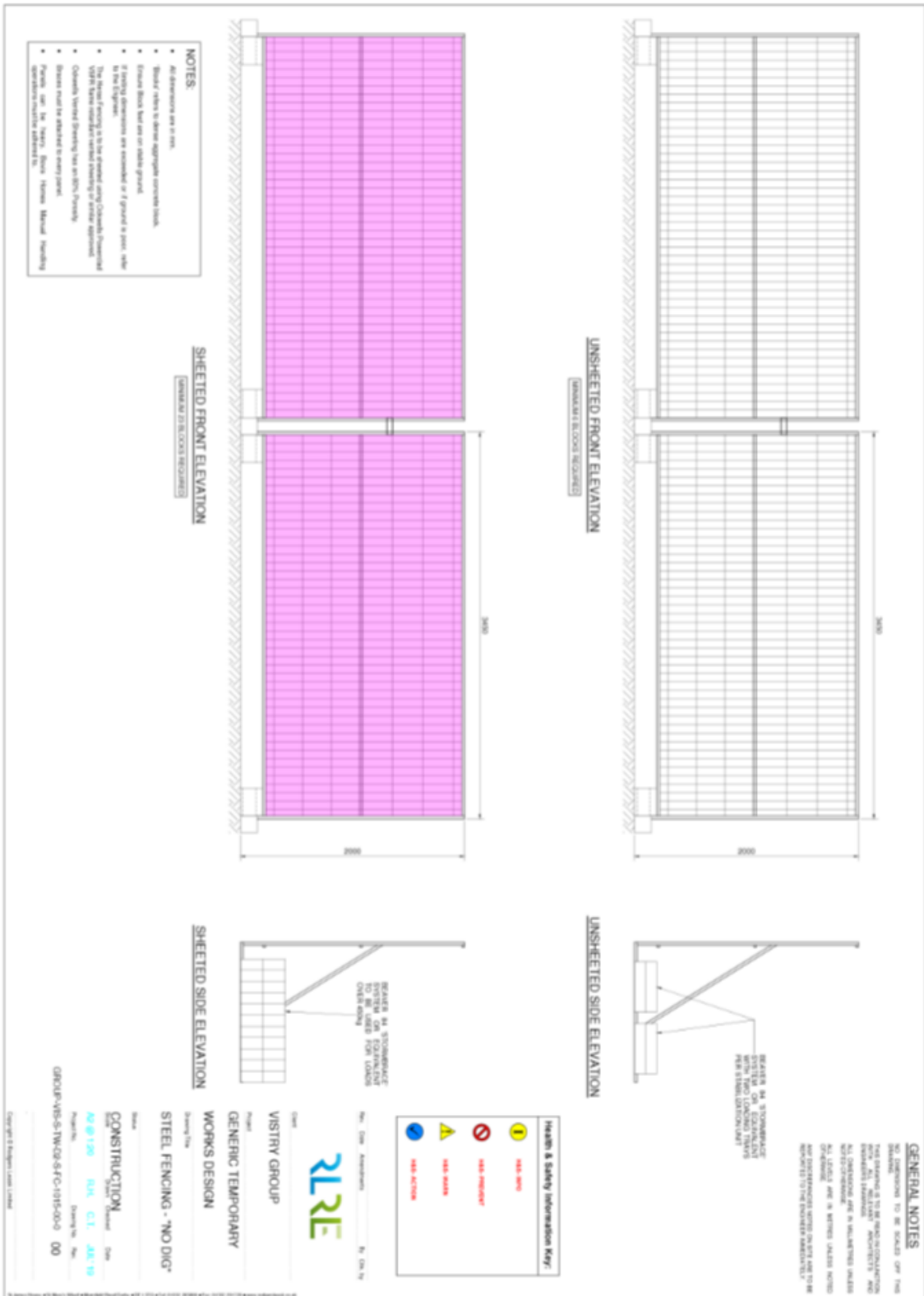
EMMER GREEN DRIVE
 BEAUTIFUL 2, 3, 4 AND 5 BEDROOM HOMES
COMING SOON



CONTRIBUTING TO THE COMMUNITY

<p>LEASING AGENT £557,000</p> <p>CAR CLUB <small>FOR 40 VEHICLES</small></p>	<p>LOCAL £350,000</p> <p>M.A.S. (MILK) <small>RESEARCH CENTRE</small></p>	<p>RECREATION £100,000</p>	<p>LOCAL STREET LIGHTS £700,000</p> <p>LOCAL STREET LIGHTS £135,000</p>
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18p x 175mm



Appendix G - No Dig Herras Fencing

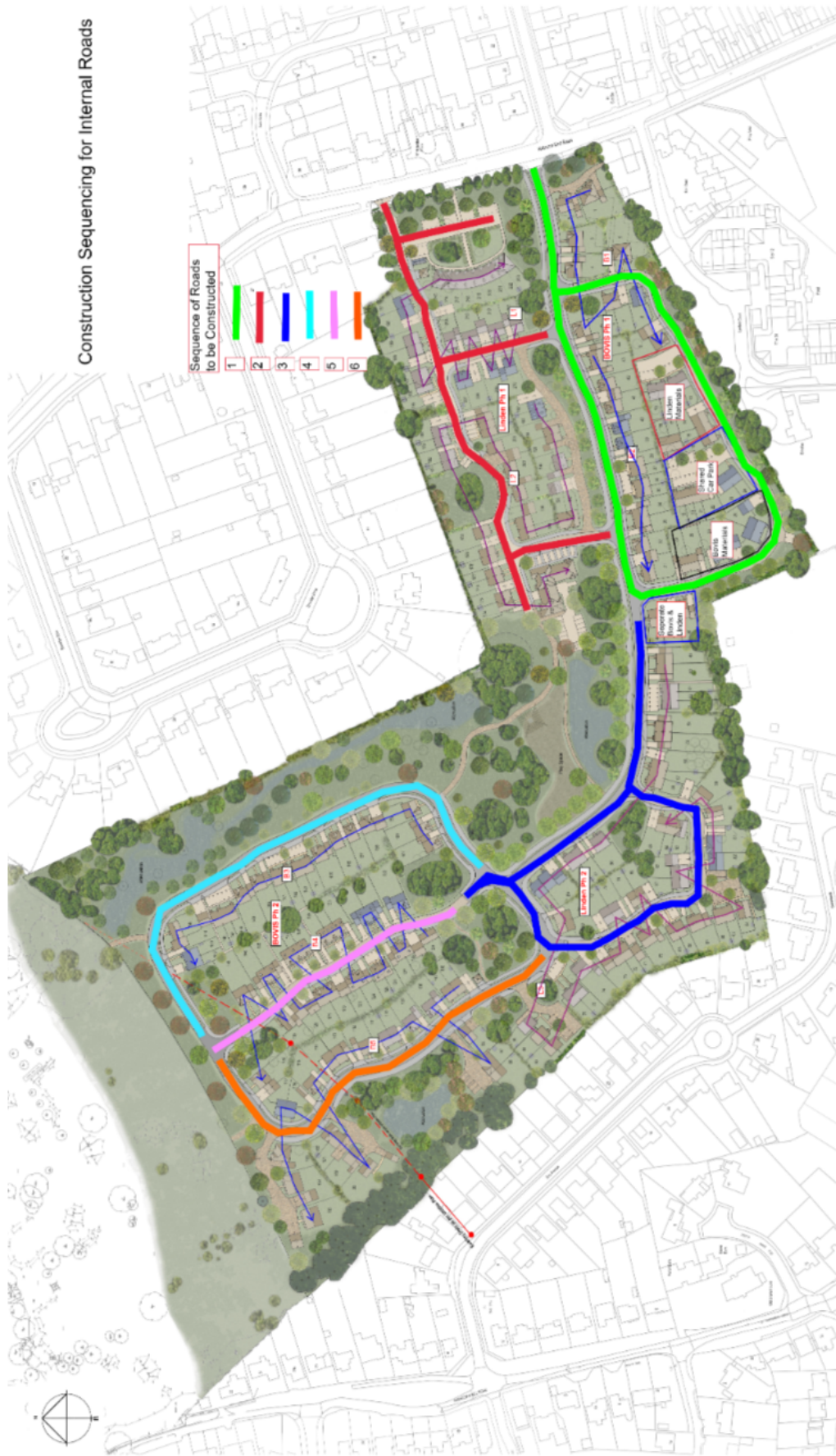


Appendix H - Site Traffic Management Plan



Appendix I - Site Segregation Pla

Construction Sequencing for Internal Roads



Construction Phasing Plan



Appendix K - Construction Phasing Plan

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UPDATE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29th March 2023

Ward: Thames

Application No.: 220922/FUL

Address: 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading, RG1 8JA

Proposal: Partial demolition of former retail warehouse and erection of a mixed-use building comprising 29 residential units, retail floorspace (Use Class E(a)) at ground floor and associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping (amended description).

Applicant: S2 Caversham Ltd

Date Valid: 22/08/2022

Application target decision date: Originally 21/11/2022, but a formal extension of time for the determination of the application has been agreed until 21/04/2023 (a further extension of time from 24/03/2023 to 21/04/2023 was agreed with the applicant following the deferral of the case at Planning Applications Committee on 1st March)

26 week date: 20/02/2023

Recommendation:

Delegate to the Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Regulatory Services (AD PTRS) to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to the satisfactory completion of a Section 106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the Section 106 legal agreement not be completed by the 21st April 2023 (unless officers on behalf of the AD PTRS agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).

The S106 legal agreement Heads of Terms are as set out in the main Agenda report to the 1st March Committee meeting.

Conditions as in main report.

1. Background

1.1 This item was considered at the Planning Applications Committee on 1st March 2023. The decision was deferred by the committee to enable officers to further discuss the proposals with the applicant. More specifically, discussions were suggested in relation to the tenure mix of the on-site affordable housing component of the scheme, explicitly to explore whether the provision of on-site rented units could be incorporated into the scheme, rather than the solely shared ownership (8 unit) affordable housing offer as stated in the main report. The general residential mix was also referenced as a further matter for discussion.

2. Summary of additional discussions with the applicant

2.1 Officers duly discussed the above matters with the applicant's agent on 3rd March 2023, initially advising that the applicant should reflect on the discussions at committee and was strongly suggested to explore whether a

revised tenure mix of the affordable component of the scheme could be provided. Thereafter, the applicant was asked to prepare a summary note to outline their position, in order for this to be further considered by officers.

- 2.2 An initial draft note was provided on 6th March, with a final version provided on 15th March. This has been provided in full at Appendix A of this update report.
- 2.3 In summary, the applicant is not seeking to alter their current affordable housing offer from that specified within the main report. In addition, the applicant is not seeking to alter the residential mix (1/2/3-bed units) within the scheme. This is owing to scheme viability in each instance.
- 2.4 In particular, the applicant's note advises:
 - The potential inclusion of rented units would have knock-on implications in relation to the overall provision of on-site affordable housing, reducing from 30% to circa 10% (3 on-site units). If 3 units were instead secured, this would equate to 2 on-site rented units in accordance with the SPD tenure breakdown.
 - Delivering on-site rented units would not be practically feasible, owing to management reasons. The applicant has approached 8 registered providers, all of whom have advised it would not be feasible to include rented homes in a scheme of this nature.
 - The applicant's position is that the scheme is not required to provide any affordable housing, owing to financial viability (as per Policy H3), Notwithstanding this position, the applicant is proposing 8 on-site shared ownership units and considers this a significant material benefit within that context.
 - If the mix of units were to be altered to include more larger units it would require a reduced amount of affordable housing from 30% to 0%, to ensure the current viability deficit is not increased further.

3. Further officer comments

- 3.1 The note has been further considered by Planning Officers, RBC Housing and RBC Valuations.
- 3.2 The lack of rented units within the affordable housing tenure mix is acknowledged as a shortfall of the proposal in the Conclusion section of the main Agenda report to the 1st March Committee. However, this shortfall was qualified within the context of the viability position.
- 3.3 Put simply, the provision of the level of on-site affordable housing, as proposed, is more than the scheme can reasonably and justifiably sustain, given the viability situation. Whilst officers do not agree with the applicant's position of nil affordable housing (as per section 4.4. of the main report), the 8 on-site units and financial contribution as per the main report in this particular instance, is considered to be a suitable response.
- 3.4 It is agreed that the provision of rented units would significantly worsen scheme viability. Furthermore, evidence via the applicant (Appendix A) and RBC Housing (see below) suggests Registered Providers would not be interested in on site rented units in this specific instance.

- 3.5 Set within this context it is difficult for officers to be in a position to insist on the provision of on-site rented units as part of the affordable component. Instead, in the main report officers applied flexibility due to the specific circumstances of this proposal.
- 3.6 Ultimately, the proposed scheme is considered to represent the best chance of delivering on-site affordable housing, which is sought in the first instance as per Policy H3.
- 3.7 More specifically in relation to the note from Quod, RBC Housing has provided the following comments:

There is a need for all types of Affordable Housing in Reading, and the clients offer of a 30% contribution when assessed against the viability position is appreciated. Rented units of Affordable Housing, especially larger family homes, remains the highest priority for the Council due the identified needs of residents on the Housing Register, so it is disappointing that the Affordable Housing will only contain Shared Ownership. However, the restrictions in relation to viability and interest from Registered Providers in the particular circumstances of this scheme are acknowledged, and in line with soft market testing completed by council officers. Feedback indicates that in this case, the low number of units combined with the location and lack of separation between tenures means it will not fit with many providers wider investment and development plans.

- 3.8 More specifically in relation to the note from Quod, RBC Valuations has provided the following comments:

It is considered that the financial balance of 8 shared ownership units would equate to 3 on site rented units, without further worsening an already challenging viability position, based on our own analysis of the information submitted with the application as a whole. It is therefore verified that the inclusion of rented units on site would significantly reduce the on-site offer. Altering the mix of unit sizes in the scheme to provide fewer one-bedroom units would also worsen the ability for the applicant to deliver on-site affordable housing, as previously accepted by Officers.

- 3.9 In terms of the wider matter of the residential mix of units, the Quod note details that alterations in this regard would result in no on-site affordable housing being possible. This further evidences the conclusion reached by officers at paragraph 6.1.9 to 6.1.12 of the main report, whereby the viability evidence from the applicant means the proposals accord with Policy CR6.

4. Updated conclusion, including the overall planning balance

- 4.1 Section 7 of the main report acknowledged that the lack of rented units is a harmful impact of the scheme, although it also recognises that the provision of rented units worsens the scheme viability and calls into question the on-site shared ownership units offered. The applicant's note expands on this and advises that the inclusion of rented units would reduce the provision able to be offered (without further worsening the viability position) from 8 to 3 on-site units, and the feasibility of this materialising into actual on-site provision is exceptionally challenging based on feedback from Registered Providers.

- 4.2 Planning officers, RBC Valuations and RBC Housing all concur that the current offer, solely providing shared ownership units, represents the best opportunity to provide the maximum amount of on-site affordable housing, as Policy H3 seeks. It is considered that sufficient evidence has been provided in this particular case as to why there is an exceptional circumstance and on-site rented units are not proposed.
- 4.3 In addition, alterations to the mix of units would result in no on-site affordable housing being possible, with this being further evidenced by the note from the applicant.
- 4.4 When these components of the scheme are considered within the overall planning balance, such as retaining a significant proportion of the local listed building, in weighing all competing issues the many identified benefits are considered to outweigh the shortfalls, as detailed within the conclusion section of the main report.
- 4.5 Set within the above context the overall planning balance and conclusion is unaltered from the main report.

Case Officer: Jonathan Markwell

Appendix A - 'Caversham Road - Housing Note' by Quod on behalf of the applicant, dated & received 15/03/2023

Caversham Road – Housing Note (Rev 005 – 15.03.23)

Context

1. **Purpose:** This note sets out justification for the housing proposals at the above site.
2. **Decisions:** Planning law requires planning decisions to be made in accordance with the development plan and other material planning considerations.

Affordable Housing Amount

3. **Policy:** Local policy H3 requires 30% affordable housing subject to financial viability considerations. The supporting text at 4.4.24 specifically states that were justified by viability evidence the affordable housing can be reduced.
4. **Proposals:** The application scheme proposes 30% Affordable housing (8.7 homes) which comprises 8x on-site affordable homes alongside an additional payment of £58,400 for the remaining 0.7 homes.
5. **Financial Viability:** The viability is constrained by site specific circumstances including the complexity and cost associated with the part retention of existing buildings and the reduction in density now proposed.

- **Reduced Scale** - *The scale of the development has been reduced significantly resulting in a reduction from 44 homes to 29 homes (-35%). This together with the increased complexity associated with the part retention of existing buildings has significantly reduced the viability of the scheme.*
- **Cost Inflation** – *Sustained increases in the cost of materials, energy and labour alongside a wide range of supply chain issues (exacerbated by brexit, the pandemic and the War in Ukraine), mean residential construction costs have inflated at an unprecedented rate (well above interim growth in sales values). This has significantly reduced the viability of the scheme. The scale of the challenge facing the delivery of new homes – due to cost inflation - was acknowledged by the secretary of state himself only yesterday.*
- **Interest Rates** – *Recent increases in the BoE base rate have increased the cost of development finance.*
- **House Prices** - *The end of Help to Buy alongside reduced mortgage availability, increased interest rates/ mortgage costs means achievable house prices are being constrained.*

A Financial Viability Assessment (FVA) was submitted with the application. The FVA evidences that the viability of the scheme is constrained and the applicant's offer (30%) therefore exceeds the otherwise viable amount that could have been provided in accordance with policy. This overall conclusion has been verified and agreed by the council's viability officer.

6. **Conclusion:** The financial viability of the scheme is heavily constrained. Notwithstanding this, the applicant has confirmed that the scheme will provide 30% affordable housing in accordance

with policy. The provision of 30% affordable housing, exceeds that otherwise viable at the applicant's own risk, is therefore a significant material benefit of the proposals.

Affordable Housing Mix

7. **Policy:** The Council's Affordable Housing SPD (2021) targets as 62/38 split of rented to ownership homes where possible.
8. **Proposals:** The application scheme proposes 6x 1 bedroom (including 1 wheelchair unit) and 2x 2 bedroom shared ownership homes (8 homes). No on-site rented homes are proposed.
9. **Financial Viability:** The independently reviewed and verified FVA evidences that the proposed level of affordable housing exceeds the otherwise viable amount that could have been proposed in accordance with policy. The proposals should therefore be strongly supported regardless of tenure. Notwithstanding this, the FVA also evidences that it would not be viable to deliver 68% of the 8x affordable homes proposed as a rented tenure. This is due to the reduced capital value of rented affordable homes compared to ownership affordable homes. To ensure the current viability deficit is not increased further (where 68% of the affordable homes are provided as rented homes) the overall amount of affordable housing would need to be reduced from 30% (8 on-site units) to c.10% (3 on-site homes). This means only c.2 rented homes would be provided in total (c.68% of the 3 homes). This would fail to maximise the delivery of affordable housing and would, in any case, not be practically feasible for the reasons set out below.
10. **Practical Feasibility:** It would not be practically feasible to deliver any rented homes on-site. This is due to the long term management requirements of Registered Providers who typically require: i) any on-site rented homes to be physically separated from the private homes (i.e serviced from a separate lift core) to enable management responsibilities, service charges and other legal obligations to be divided (noting they are more likely occupied by tenants who may be in receipt of welfare income that cannot be used to pay for certain service charges); and ii) a sufficient number of rented homes (significantly greater than c.2) to enable the stock to be managed efficiently (this is particularly important for rented homes which have more intensive management requirements).

The following RP's (Table 1) have been approached and all have confirmed the inclusion of rented homes in a scheme of this nature would not be practical feasible. Further details are provided at Annex 1 to enable the council to verify the position.

Table 1 – Registered Provider Feedback

Registered Provider	Practical Feasibility
Network	Not Feasible
L&G	Not Feasible
Peabody	Not Feasible
Notting Hill Genesis	Not Feasible
Guinness	Not Feasible

Optivo	Not Feasible
MTVH	Not Feasible
Clarion	Not Feasible

Proposing any on-site rented homes on-site therefore risks delivery of the scheme, and much needed new homes, becoming frustrated.

11. **National Policy:** The proposal meets and exceeds the national policy expectation for all major schemes to contribute 10% affordable home ownership (NPPF paragraph 64).
12. **Local Housing Need:** Longstanding increases in both local house prices and private rents relative to household incomes means there is a significant growing need for shared ownership homes (for those otherwise forced to live in low quality buy to let or with parents later into adult life). The provision of SO, which is only a very small proportion of the local housing mix, would also create a more mixed and balanced community.
13. **Conclusion:** The scheme is not required to provide any Affordable Housing in accordance with Policy H3 of the adopted Local Plan due to financial viability. Notwithstanding this, the applicant has confirmed the scheme will provide 8x on-site Shared Ownership homes. This is a significant material benefit of the scheme. It is not financially viable to deliver 68% of these homes as rented tenures. It is also not practically feasible to deliver any rented homes on-site.

Overall Housing Size Mix

14. **Policy:** Local Policy CR6 sets out a preferred unit mix but confirms there is flexibility for an alternative unit size mix where 'it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render the development unviable'.
15. **Proposals:** The application scheme comprises 23x1-bed (79.31%), 5x2-bed (17.24%) and 1x3-bed (3.45%). It therefore provides a mix of unit sizes for individuals, couples/ young families and some larger families.
16. **Financial Viability:** The independently reviewed and verified FVA evidences that the applicant is not technically required to provide any affordable housing. Notwithstanding this, the FVA also evidences that due to the lower capital value relative to the floor area of the larger 2 and 3 bedroom homes, where the unit mix is amended to the policy target it would reduce scheme efficiency and the total revenues created by the scheme. To ensure the current viability deficit is not increased further (where the policy mix of unit sizes is provided) the overall amount of affordable housing would need to be reduced from 30% (8 on-site units) to 0% (NIL on-site homes). Amending the unit size mix would therefore clearly both fail to maximise the delivery of affordable housing and would render the scheme undeliverable without any affordable housing contribution.

17. **Site Location / Constraints:** Notwithstanding the above, the following material planning considerations also support the proposed unit size mix on this specific site. The location of the site in the Town Centre makes it better suited to individuals/ couples than for a large number of families. The site's relatively constrained size and nature (limiting opportunities for ground floor access to private amenity and play space) makes it better suited to individuals/ couples than for a large number of families. It also makes it more difficult to reconfigure the design in a way that would allow for a greater proportion of 2 and 3 beds without compromising the overall design quality.
18. **Conclusion** The approach taken to maximise the schemes contribution towards affordable housing while taking a site specific approach to mix is appropriate is considered appropriate on balance.

Overall Conclusions

19. **Planning Balance:** The provision of 30% affordable housing alongside a mix of 1, 2 and 3 bedroom homes exceeds that which the scheme is required to provide due to viability considerations and is fully justified in the context of policy and the site's constraints. It should be awarded significant positive decision weight in the overall planning balance alongside the other socio-economic benefits of the scheme which make it very beneficial in the round. This has been recognised by the Case Officer within his Committee Report.

Annex 1 – Registered Provider Feedback

Registered Provider	Date	Approach	Practical Feasibility	Reason
Network	05/12/22	Call	Not Feasible	Tenure Separation
L&G	08/11/22	Call	Not Feasible	Tenure Separation
Peabody	12/12/22	Email	Not Feasible	Tenure Separation
Notting Hill Genesis	08/11/22	Call	Not Feasible	Tenure Separation
Guinness	16/11/22	Call	Not Feasible	Tenure Separation
Optivo	16/11/22	Call	Not Feasible	Tenure Separation
MTVH	16/11/22	Call	Not Feasible	Tenure Separation
Clarion	16/11/22	Call	Not Feasible	Tenure Separation

From: Sarah McMillan <Sarah.McMillan@peabody.org.uk>
Sent: 12 December 2022 10:02
To: Thomas Hatch <thomas.hatch@quod.com>
Cc: Bilal Hussain <Bilal.Hussain@peabody.org.uk>
Subject: RE: S106 Opportunity

Hi Tom,

Hope you are well. We have discussed internally, and it is not preferable for us to have mixed cores. We would be interested in the scheme if there were not mixed cores.

Kind regards

Sarah McMillan (She/Her) | Head of Land and Partnerships (London) | Development

Tel: Mobile: 07528540648 | email: sarah.mcmillan@peabody.org.uk

Registered Office: 45 Westminster Bridge Road | London SE1 7JB

Web: www.peabody.org.uk | Facebook: PeabodyLDN | Twitter: @PeabodyLDN



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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 1st March 2023

Ward: Thames

Application No.: 220922/FUL

Address: 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading, RG1 8JA

Proposal: Partial demolition of former retail warehouse and erection of a mixed-use building comprising 29 residential units, retail floorspace (Use Class E(a)) at ground floor and associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping (amended description).

Applicant: S2 Caversham Ltd

Date Valid: 22/08/2022

Application target decision date: Originally 21/11/2022, but a formal extension of time for the determination of the application has been agreed until 24/03/2023

26 week date: 20/02/2023

RECOMMENDATION

Delegate to the Assistant Director for Planning, Transport and Public Protection (AD PTPP) to (i) GRANT full planning permission subject to the satisfactory completion of a Section 106 legal agreement or (ii) to REFUSE permission should the Section 106 legal agreement not be completed by 24th March 2023 (unless officers on behalf of the AD PTPP agree to a later date for completion of the legal agreement).

The Section 106 legal agreement to secure the following:

- On-site provision of 8 Shared Ownership Affordable Housing units (6x1-bed units at first floor level and 2x2-bed units - one each at ground and first floor level), together with a cascade mechanism that should any Affordable Housing Units have not been disposed of to a Housing Association (HA) or Registered Provider (RP) within certain times and under certain circumstances, the applicant shall give notice to the Council to seek a Housing Association or RP, or for the Council to purchase the affordable housing units. Within certain times and under certain circumstances, should the Council not exercise this option the affordable housing contribution transfers to a financial contribution towards affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough (as per the policy requirements, with the amount totalling £585,344) and the on-site units are no longer required to be provided as on-site affordable units.
- A payment-in-lieu commuted sum financial contribution towards affordable housing of £58,400.
- Should the application site subsequently be extended/altered to create further residential units then contributions towards affordable housing would apply on a cumulative basis.
- Public Open Space financial contribution of £60,900.
- Employment, Skills and Training - The production, implementation and monitoring of an Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) for the Construction phase of the development. Or, in the event that the developer chooses not to provide the ESP themselves, a financial contribution commuted sum, calculated to be £6,621.83 using the SPD formula will be secured in lieu of an ESP.
- Car club provision, so future residents have access to and the use of a car club either on-site or as part of an existing provision nearby to the site in Central Reading.

- Highways works under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 with respect to proposed Cycle Route Improvement works affecting the existing highway on Northfield Road (see figure 9 below).
- Zero Carbon Offset financial contribution, as per the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD 2019. If zero carbon is not achieved the scheme must instead achieve a minimum of a 35% improvement in regulated emissions over the Target Emissions Rate in the 2013 Building Regulations, plus provide a financial contribution of £1,800 per remaining tonne towards carbon offsetting within the Borough (calculated as £60/tonne over a 30-year period).
- Contribution towards monitoring costs plus a separate commitment to pay the Council's reasonable legal costs in connection with the proposed S106 Agreement will be payable whether or not the Agreement is completed.
- Any unexpended contributions to be repaid within ten years beginning with the start of the Financial Year after the final obligation payment for each obligation is received. In accordance with Policy CC9.
- Indexation - All financial contributions to be index-linked from date of permission unless expressly stated otherwise.

And the following conditions to include:

1. *Time Limit - 3 years*
2. *Approved plans*
3. * Demolition works not to be undertaken before a contract for site redevelopment, as per submitted and approved details to LPA.
4. * Pre-commencement level 2 photographic recording of existing buildings for the Historic Environment Record
5. Pre-commencement, barring partial demolition works hereby approved, details of all external materials to be submitted to the LPA (and sample details to be provided on site - including the expectation for the brick bond to be similar to the southern warehouse façade to be demolished) and approved in writing with the LPA. Approved details to be retained on site until the work has been completed
6. Ground floor shopfront details (including sections) at 1:10 scale (expectation to comply with RBC Shopfronts SPD).
7. Compliance condition relating to the retention of the 'Smallbone' ghost signage on the Northfield Road elevation
8. * Pre-commencement Demolition and Construction Method Statement (including EP-based matters)
9. Compliance condition for provision of vehicle parking as shown prior to first occupation, with 4 spaces for the existing office use, 5 spaces for the proposed retail use (4 for customers and 1 for staff) and 5 spaces for future residential occupiers.
10. Compliance condition for provision of vehicular access as shown prior to first occupation
11. Compliance condition for provision of cycle parking as shown prior to first occupation
12. Compliance condition for provision of refuse and recycling storage facilities as shown prior to first occupation
13. Compliance condition for existing accesses to be stopped up after new access is in use
14. Pre-occupation submission and approval of all postal addresses in order to ensure that parking permits are not automatically issued
15. Compliance condition specifying no automatic entitlement to parking permit
16. Pre-occupation submission and approval of EV Charging Point Scheme details
17. Pre-commencement, barring partial demolition works hereby approved, detailed scheme for protection of future residential occupiers from the external noise environment
18. Compliance condition relating to delivery and waste collection times being restricted

- from 0800 to 2000 Mondays to Saturdays and 1000 to 1800 on Sundays and Bank Holidays
19. Compliance condition restricting the ground floor retail unit opening/operating outside 0700 to 2300 Monday to Saturday and 0800 to 1800 on Sundays and Bank Holidays
 20. Pre-installation of mechanical plant submission and approval of a noise assessment
 21. Pre-construction above foundation level submission and approval of air quality mitigation details
 22. * Pre-commencement (including partial demolition works hereby approved) contaminated land site characterisation assessment
 23. * Pre-commencement (including partial demolition works hereby approved) contaminated land remediation scheme
 24. Pre-construction above foundation level contaminated land validation report
 25. Reporting of unexpected contamination at any time
 26. Compliance condition relating to hours of demolition/construction works
 27. Compliance condition relating to no burning of materials or green waste on site
 28. Pre-occupation submission and approval of measures to prevent pests and vermin accessing bin stores
 29. Pre-commencement, barring the partial demolition works hereby approved, submission and approval of all hard and soft landscaping details, specifically including biodiverse roof details
 30. Pre-occupation submission and approval of boundary treatment details
 31. Pre-commencement, barring the partial demolition works hereby approved, submission and approval of habitat enhancement measures
 32. Compliance condition relating to protecting nesting birds during partial site clearance works
 33. Compliance condition for excavation works to not be left open overnight, to protect wildlife and animals during construction
 34. Pre-commencement, barring partial demolition works hereby approved, submission and approval of Sustainable Drainage Strategy
 35. Compliance condition for SuDS approved in condition above to be completed prior to first occupation of any part of the development and managed/maintained thereafter.
 36. Compliance condition for development to implement the FRA mitigation measures prior to first occupation
 37. Compliance condition permitting Class E(a) use only within the ground floor retail unit
 38. Compliance condition for the ground floor Class E(a) unit fronting Caversham Road to retain 'active window displays'
 39. Dwelling mix restricted to 23 x 1-bedroom, 5 x 2-bedroom and 1 x 3-bedroom units
 40. No conversion of non-residential floorspace to residential without separate permission
 41. Pre-occupation accessible and adaptable and 5% wheelchair user dwelling details
 42. Management of miscellaneous items (lights, meter boxes, flues, vents or pipes, and no window cleaning or telecommunications equipment, building maintenance unit, alarm boxes, television aerials or satellite dishes)
 43. Flat roof areas not to be used as roof terraces unless where specified on the approved plans
 44. Pre-occupation submission and approval of external lighting details
 45. Pre-commencement, barring partial demolition, Security Strategy details to be submitted and approved
 46. Pre-occupation submission and approval of privacy screen details
 47. Pre-commencement, barring partial demolition, submission and approval of fire statement / strategy measures.
 48. Pre-commencement, barring partial demolition, SAP assessment (energy) - design

stage

49. Pre-occupation of any residential unit SAP assessment (energy) - as built
50. Pre-commencement, barring partial demolition, submission and approval of an interim BREEAM Certificate demonstrating a minimum BREEAM 'Very good' rating
51. Pre-occupation of retail unit submission and approval of a final BREEAM Certificate demonstrating a minimum BREEAM 'Very Good' rating

Informatives:

1. Positive and Proactive Statement
2. Highway works
3. High density residential development and car parking
4. Section 106 Legal Agreement
5. Possible requirement for separate advertisement consent
6. Clarification concerning pre-commencement conditions (marked with an *)
7. CIL
8. Party Wall Act
9. Building Regulations
10. Terms and conditions
11. Noise between residential properties
12. Definition of shell and core, further to condition 3
13. TROs are subject to separate legislation

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The application site comprises a corner plot on the west side of Caversham Road (the IDR) and south side of Northfield Road, to the north-west of the town centre and Reading Station. The site is broadly rectangular in shape, flat in topographical terms and 0.16 hectares in size (see figure 1 below).



Figure 1: Site Location Plan (not to scale)

- 1.2 As existing, the site comprises a series of buildings. Most prominently on the eastern frontage of the site is a 2-storey retail warehouse. This has been vacant since December 2018 (as per the CIL form submitted by the applicant), having previously been occupied for many decades by Drews the Ironmongers. On the Northfield Road elevation, on the west side of the site are the smaller scale 2-3 storey buildings known as 'The Brewery' and 'The Malthouse', which like the main building were all historically former brewery buildings. As existing, these buildings are in active office use, with a vehicular parking and service yard located between the separate buildings and accessed off Northfield Road.

- 1.3 All of the existing application site buildings were added to the Council’s list of locally important buildings and structures on 11/02/2020 (LL15: Former Dreads, 71-73 Caversham Road, 1 Northfield Road and the Malthouse Building). The local listing states:

A collection of buildings at the corner of Caversham Road and Northfield Road, with strong historical/social and industrial connections to the Reading beer industry.

The original owner, Henry Pendlebury Dowson, was a notable Reading figure. He was a well-known local businessman and maltster who owned two other malthouses in Reading. The buildings were built for the purposes of malting in the latter part of the Nineteenth Century, but these were later converted to other commercial uses; although the principal structures survive. The buildings contain features notable to the area and the industry such as patterned brickwork and decorative arches and are an important feature in the local townscape.



Figure 2: The application site from Caversham Road looking south-west (Nov 2022)

- 1.4 In dismissing a previous planning appeal at the site (see section 3 for details) the Inspector commented that the existing building has decorative brickwork, a low height with pitched roofs in various materials, notable window openings particularly the distinctly large ground floor windows on Northfield Road) and looks like a Victorian warehouse, with the original use as a maltings being able to be appreciated. The Inspector also commented that the site is a landmark owing to its corner position and the openness/alignment of Caversham Road and Northfield Road. Furthermore, the Inspector considered that the architectural and historical value at the site is largely as a whole (i.e. all buildings at the site collectively).
- 1.5 From a transport perspective the A329 Caversham Road forms part of the town’s Inner Distribution Road (IDR), with two lanes in both north and south directions (see figure 2 above). The pedestrian network surrounding the site has adequate footway and street lighting provision. There is a staggered pelican crossing on Caversham Road, immediately south of Northfield Road. Vehicular access to the site is currently provided via Northfield Road only. Caversham Road and the surrounding road network all have extensive parking restrictions preventing on-street parking.

1.6 As already referenced above, the existing buildings at the site are locally listed, but it is also relevant to clarify that the site is not located within a conservation area and none of the buildings are statutory listed either. Accordingly, in practice, being locally listed means they are ‘non-designated heritage assets’ for the purposes of national planning policy, local planning policy and all related guidance. The following other designations and information in relation to the application site are considered to be relevant:

- The site is not specifically allocated for development within the local plan;
- The site is within the boundary of the Reading Central Area (Policies CR1-10)
- The site is within the Office Core (Policy CR1)
- The site is within an Air Quality Management Area (Policy EN15),
- The site is within Flood Zone 2 (Policy EN18)
- The site has potential for contaminated land (given its former uses) (Policy EN16)
- The site is within a Smoke Control Zone
- Caversham Road is part of the classified highway network (see Policy TR3) and Northfield Road is a cycle route (see Policy TR4)
- The site is outside, but adjacent to one of the three major opportunity areas within Central Reading, with the Station/River MOA being to the north and east of the site.
- The site is outside a designated tall buildings cluster (in contrast to the site to the east (former Royal Mail sorting office at 80 Caversham Road) which is inside the MOA / tall buildings cluster).
- The site is in Thames Ward.



Figure 3: Aerial view of the surrounding area looking north (from Google maps)

1.7 The surrounding area comprises a mix of uses. To the north, beyond Northfield Road is the 3-storey Shurgard self-storage facility, while to the east are the vacant former Royal Mail sorting office and distribution centre, with ancillary 3-storey offices closest to the Caversham Road boundary. To the north-east is the Vastern Court Retail Park, occupied by a series of operators. Both the Royal Mail and Retail Park sites are subject to either a current pending application (Royal Mail) or appeal (Retail Park) for redevelopment (see relevant history section below). To the south are a modestly scaled 2-storey terrace of buildings occupied by Pure Gym and formerly by Dawsons Musical Instruments store, with substantial surface-level parking to the rear. Beyond this is the 2-storey Caversham Road fire station and the main railway line. To the west on Northfield Road are the 3-storey block of flats known as Monmouth Court, beyond which are the low-rise domestic scaled Victorian terraced properties and streets such as Swansea Road and York Road, as seen in figure 3 above. As such, the character to the west is distinct from that to the east (as existing and in terms of policy).

1.8 The application is being considered at Planning Applications Committee as it relates to a major application which is recommended for approval by officers.

2. PROPOSALS

2.1 Full planning permission is sought for the partial demolition of the former retail warehouse building on the corner of Caversham Road and Northfield Road. The extent of retention / demolition of existing buildings at the site is summarised below in figure 4. The existing remaining building will be partly remodelled and partly redeveloped to provide a part 2 storey (and accommodation within the roofspace through two proposed dormers on the Northfield Road elevation and rooflights on both street elevations) building fronting onto Northfield Road and part of the Caversham Road frontage, rising to a part 5 and part 6 storey building in the new build parts of the site fronting Caversham Road.



Figure 4 - The extent of retention and demolition of existing site buildings

2.2 No changes are proposed to the 2-3 storey 'The Brewery' and 'The Malthouse' office buildings on the western side of the site fronting Northfield Road. These would remain unaltered as offices as part of the proposed works at the site, with these structures included within the redline boundary of the site.

2.3 The proposed development seeks to provide a 297sqm retail unit (Use Class E(a)) at part ground floor level, along the entire Caversham Road frontage of the site and part of the Northfield Road frontage too. The unit would be serviced via a proposed loading bay on Northfield Road, with access provided to the rear of the unit. A standalone retail refuse store is also proposed on-site, adjacent to the vehicular access point on Northfield Road. Cycle parking is also proposed to the front and rear of the proposed unit.

2.4 Aside from this retail component, the remainder of the development seeks to create self-contained residential units (Class C3). A total of 29 units are proposed across the building, with the proposed mix being 23 x 1-bedroom units, 5 x 2-bedroom units and 1 x 3-bedroom unit, as detailed in figure 5 below. 21 of the 29 units are proposed for market sale (17x1, 3x2 & 1x3-bed units), with 8 on-site shared ownership affordable housing units. This equates to a 27.59% on-site provision of affordable housing, with this comprising 6 x 1-bedroom units (all at first floor level) and 2 x 2-bedrooms units (one each at ground and first floor level). A commuted sum of £58,400 is proposed to ensure the affordable housing provision is at a policy compliant level. 2 wheelchair accessible (Part M4(3)) units are

proposed, split equally between the affordable and market tenures, comprising 1x1-bed shared ownership unit at first floor level and 1x2-bed market unit at fifth floor level.

Floor	1-bedroom	2-bedroom	3-bedroom	Total units	Units with private amenity space
Ground		1*		1	1
First	6*	1*	1	8	6
Second	7			7	7
Third	4	1		5	5
Fourth	4	1		5	5
Fifth	2	1		3	3
Total	23	5	1	29	27

* denotes the 6 x 1-bed and 2 x 2-bed shared ownership affordable housing units proposed

Figure 5 - Proposed mix of residential units.

2.5 The residential units will be accessed from two entrances, one off Northfield Road and a step-free option on the western elevation of the building, accessed via the on-site vehicle parking area/courtyard. Refuse and cycle stores associated with the residential units are integrated within the proposed building at ground floor level, with two lifts and a single stair core providing access to the upper floors. 27 of the 29 residential units would include private amenity space (see figure 5 above), largely in the form of external balconies, but also including a series of ‘winter gardens’ within units fronting Caversham Road. In addition, at fifth floor level an external shared podium garden courtyard is proposed. This is 70sqm in area and is shown to propose soft landscaping and seating spaces, with it intended to be available for use by all future residential occupiers. The roof level of the building includes photovoltaic panels and a biodiverse roof. Mechanical plant space is provided predominantly at ground floor level (shown below in figure 6), as well as rising through the floors of the building.

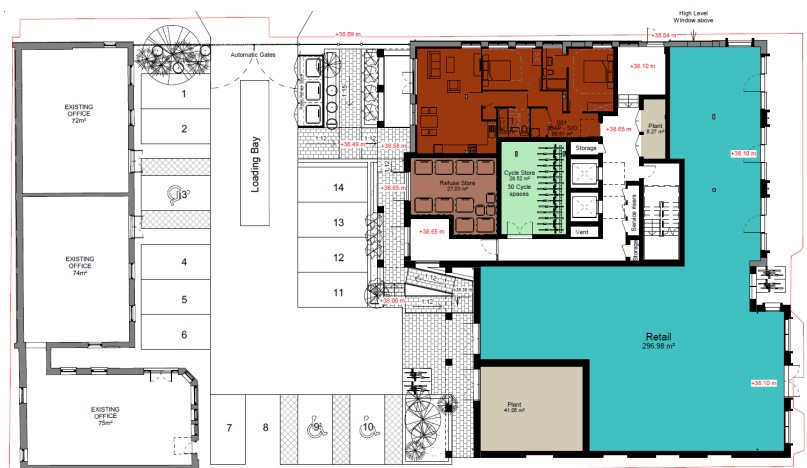


Figure 6 - Proposed ground floor plan

2.6 Vehicular access into the site will be via replacement automatic gates off Northfield Road, with fourteen vehicular spaces; providing for the existing office use (4 spaces), the proposed retail use (4 for customers and 1 for staff) and future residential occupiers (5 spaces). Included within this total are three wheelchair accessible parking spaces (see figure 6 above). The proposed parking provision represents an increase in two spaces when compared with the 12 spaces at the

existing site. The space will also include elements of soft landscaping to separate the pedestrians and vehicles and soften the proposed Northfield Road entrance.

2.7 During the course of the application's consideration, a number of changes have been made to the scheme, summarised as including:

- A change in the proposed external materials, with the omission of the originally proposed buff brick components and instead the new build brickwork elements will solely comprise red brick finishes.
- The original proposal sought to provide nil on-site affordable housing. During the course of the application, following negotiations, this has altered to firstly the proposed introduction of 4x1-bed first floor on-site shared ownership affordable housing units. Following further negotiations, the on-site provision was subsequently increased again to 8 shared ownership units (6x1-bed at first floor and 1x2-bed at both ground and first floor), which is the proposal under consideration.
- A change in the mix of units proposed, with one originally proposed 2-bedroom unit becoming a 1-bedroom unit at second floor level. The overall unit mix therefore changed from the original submission of 22 x 1-bedroom, 6 x 2-bedroom and 1 x 3-bedroom units to 23 x 1-bedroom, 5 x 2-bedroom and 1 x 3-bedroom units.
- An increase in size of the ground floor mechanical plant room, therefore slightly reducing the size of the ground floor retail space from 311sqm to 297sqm
- Changes to the proposed ground floor waste store, increasing provision and including collection vehicles servicing the store from the proposed on-site car park, as opposed to the original intention of this being from the proposed Northfield Road loading bay.

2.8 None of these changes to the scheme were considered to be of a nature or extent which warranted formal public re-consultation to occur.

2.9 In terms of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL), the applicant duly completed a CIL Liability form as part of the submission of this application. This specifies that the building to be partly demolished / partly retained was last occupied for its lawful use on 20/12/2018, whilst the 2 separate buildings proposed to be retained on site are still in office use. Should there be no deduction for the existing floorspace to be retained, then solely on the basis of the proposed floorspace the CIL liability is likely to be £391,566.92 (proposed residential GIA of 2343.87 x 2023 indexation residential CIL rate of £167.06 per sqm - all floorspace figures are based on information supplied by the applicant). This figure would reduce if the proposed on-site affordable housing were to qualify for mandatory or discretionary social housing relief.

Drawings:

MP_SW_1000 Rev P2 - Site Location Plan

MP_SW_1004 Rev P1 - Existing Site Plan

MP_PL_1100 Rev P1 - Existing Ground Floor Plan

MP_PL_1101 Rev P1 - Existing First Floor Plan

MP_PL_1109 Rev P1 - Existing Roof Plan

MP_EL_1200 Rev P2 - Existing North Elevation

MP_EL_1201 Rev P1 - Existing South Elevation

MP_EL_1202 Rev P1 - Existing East Elevation

MP_EL_1203 Rev P2 - Existing West Elevation

MP_EL_1204 Rev P2 - Existing East Courtyard Elevation

MP_EL_1205 Rev P1 - Existing West Courtyard Elevation

MP_SW_1002 Rev P1 - Existing Street Elevations
MP_SE_1303 Rev P1 - Existing Section AA
MP_SE_1304 Rev P1 - Existing Section BB
MP_SE_1305 Rev P1 - Existing Section CC

MP_PL_1110 Rev P1 - Demolition - Existing Ground Floor Plan
MP_PL_1111 Rev P1 - Demolition - Existing First Floor Plan
MP_PL_1112 Rev P1 - Demolition - Existing Roof Plan
MP_EL_1212 Rev P1 - Demolition - Existing North Elevation
MP_EL_1213 Rev P1 - Demolition - Existing North Elevation
MP_EL_1214 Rev P1 - Demolition - Existing East Elevation
MP_EL_1215 Rev P2 - Demolition - Existing West Elevation
MP_EL_1216 Rev P2 - Demolition - Existing East Courtyard Elevation
MP_EL_1217 Rev P1 - Demolition - Existing West Courtyard Elevation
MP_SE_1306 Rev P1 - Demolition - Existing Section AA
MP_SE_1308 Rev P1 - Demolition - Existing Section BB
MP_SE_1309 Rev P1 - Demolition - Existing Section CC

MP_EL_1209 Rev P2 - Proposed West Elevation
MP_EL_1211 Rev P2 - Proposed East Courtyard Elevation
MP_SE_1300 Rev P1 - Proposed Section AA
MP_SE_1302 Rev P1 - Proposed Section CC

As all received on 22/08/2022

MP_SW_1001 Rev P2 - Proposed Site Plan
MP_PL_1104 Rev P3 - Proposed Second Floor Plan
MP_PL_1105 Rev P2 - Proposed Third Floor Plan
MP_PL_1106 Rev P2 - Proposed Fourth Floor Plan
MP_PL_1107 Rev P2 - Proposed Fifth Floor Plan
MP_PL_1108 Rev P3 - Proposed Roof Plan
MP_EL_1206 Rev P3 - Proposed North Elevation
MP_EL_1207 Rev P3 - Proposed South Elevation
MP_EL_1208 Rev P3 - Proposed East Elevation
MP_EL_1210 Rev P3 - Proposed West Courtyard Elevation

MP_EL_1212 Rev P2 - Proposed North Elevation (without Landscape)
MP_EL_1213 Rev P2 - Proposed South Elevation (without Landscape)
MP_EL_1214 Rev P2 - Proposed East Elevation (without Landscape)
MP_EL_1215 Rev P2 - Proposed West Elevation (without Landscape)

MP_SW_1003 Rev P3 - Proposed Street Elevations
MP_SE_1301 Rev P2 - Proposed Section BB
MP_RS_1500 Rev P2 - Retail Refuse Store Plans & Elevations
As all received on 01/12/2022

MP_PL_1102 Rev P5 - Proposed Ground Floor Plan
MP_PL_1103 Rev P4 - Proposed First Floor Plan
As received on 08/02/2023

Other supporting documents:

Air Quality Assessment by RPS Ref JAR02849 Rev 1 dated 10/05/2022;
Phase 1 Contaminated Land Preliminary Risk Assessment by RPS Ref JER8219 Version 03
dated 07/01/2022;

Preliminary Bat Roost Assessment by Amphibian, Reptile & Mammal Conservation Limited
Flood Risk Assessment and Surface Water Drainage Strategy by RPS Ref HLEF82310 Version 2 dated 09/06/2022;
Flood Risk Sequential Assessment by RPS Ref HLEF82310 Version 2 dated 17/02/2022;
Supporting letter by Quod Ref Q100020, dated 15/06/2022
Planning Noise Assessment by Waterman Ref WIE16329-101-R-1.1.4_Noise Issue 001 dated 11/05/2022;
Heritage and Townscape Assessment by Icen Projects;
Housing Delivery and Viability Statement by Quod dated June 2022;
Sustainability Overheating Risk Assessment TM59 by Hoare Lea Revision 00 - dated 11 March 2022;
Utilities Assessment by RPS Ref 82598 Version 004 dated 17/02/2022;
Planning Statement by Quod Ref Q100020 dated June 2022;
Transport Statement by Mayer Brown Ref S2CavershamRoad Rev A dated 11/05/2022;
Design and Access Statement by JTP Ref 01662B dated 20/06/2022
As all received on 22/06/2022

Sustainability Statement by Hoare Lea Rev 00, dated 19/05/2022;
Preliminary Ecological Appraisal by Middlemarch, Ref 158559-01, dated 18/08/2022
Biodiversity Net Gain Assessment by Middlemarch Environmental Ref 158559-02, dated 12/08/2022
The Biodiversity Metric 3.1 - Calculation Tool excel document by Middlemarch Environmental Ltd, dated 18/08/2022;
Landscape Principles by Quod, dated August 2022;
S106 Draft Heads of Terms Proposal by Quod Ref Q100020 dated July 2022;
Open Space Statement by Quod Ref Q100020 dated July 2022
As all received on 22/08/2022

Letter from Haslams 'Proposed development of 71-73 Caversham Road' dated 27/09/2019
Valuation Report by Haslams Surveyors LLP dated 24/09/2019
Feasibility Bunker Cost Model by AECOM Issue 1.0 dated 29/08/2018
As all received on 06/09/2022

Daylight and Sunlight Report by Calford Seaden Ref L190224/PS/G8, dated 20 September 2022
As received 23/09/2022

Energy Strategy by Hoare Lea Revision 01 - dated 06 October 2022
As received 06/10/2022

Email from Quod 'RE: 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading (220922)', dated and received 17/11/2022

Design and Access Statement Addendum by JTP Ref 01662B dated 20/11/2022
As received on 30/11/2022

Letter from Quod 'Formal Revision to Planning Application (Ref: 220922) on behalf of S2 Caversham Limited' Ref Q100020, dated 30/11/2022
As received on 01/12/2022

P22978.MEP.001 Rev B MEP Plant Locations Roof Layout
P22978.MEP.002 Rev C MEP Plant Locations Ground Floor Layout
CIL_01 Rev P3 - Proposed CIL Plans
Planning Comment Response Summary by MEP Concepts Rev A dated 19/12/2022

BRUKL Output Document Compliance with England Building Regulations Part L 2021 dated 08/12/2022

Part L compliance report - Unit 101 - 3B5P MF Type
Part L compliance report - Unit 104 - 1B2P MF-EF Type
Part L compliance report - Unit 001 - 2B4P GF Type
Part L compliance report - Unit 401 - 2B4P TF Type
Part L compliance report - Unit 502 - 1B2P TF Type
Part L compliance report - Unit 108 - 1B2P MF Type
Part L compliance report - Unit 301 - 2B4P MF Type
As all received on 22/12/2022

Email from Quod 'RE: 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading (220922)', dated and received 27/12/2022

Caversham Road - BREEAM update by Hoare Lea Ref DOC-2324398-05-JT-20230106-BREEAM Target Score update-REV01.docx
As received 06/01/2023

Email from Quod 'RE: 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading (220922)', dated and received 24/01/2023

Email from Quod 'RE: 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading (220922)', dated and received 31/01/2023

Email from Quod 'RE: 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading (220922)', dated and received 06/02/2023 at 10:49am

Email from Quod 'RE: 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading (220922)', dated and received 06/02/2023 at 12:48pm

MP_SC_1400 Rev P4 - Area Schedules

Email from Quod 'RE: 71-73 Caversham Road, Reading (220922)', dated 08/02/2023
As both received on 08/02/2023

3. PLANNING HISTORY

Application site

- 3.1 7437 - Store for cellulose. Granted 25/03/1960.
- 3.2 13987 - Lean to extension. Granted 09/09/1966.
- 3.3 77/01066/00 - New shopfront central infill link replacing existing building for retail & storage. Granted 06/01/1978.
- 3.4 95/00345/FD (Alternative Ref 950014) To fit roller shutters to front windows on outside. Refused 15/06/1995.
- 3.5 97/00509/AD Freestanding advertisement panel sign. Refused 08/09/1997.
- 3.6 191792/FUL - Demolition of former retail warehouse and erection of a mixed-use building comprising 44 residential units consisting of x5 affordable units, 194sqm of retail floorspace (Use Class A1) at ground floor and associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping. Refused 16/10/2020.
- 3.7 The reasons for refusal related to (in summary):
 1. Complete loss of 71-73 Caversham Road and its removal compromising the setting of the remaining cluster of non-designated heritage buildings; Also a

failure to demonstrate that retention and re-use has been explored fully and the scheme benefits not significantly outweighing the harm, contrary to Policies EN1 & EN4 and section 16 of the NPPF.

2. Out-of-scale and failure to transition down with neighbouring buildings within and adjoining the site along Caversham Road and Northfield Road, contrary to Policies CC7, EN1 & EN4 and section 16 of the NPPF.
3. Absence of a legal agreement to secure a financial contribution towards affordable housing, open space, highways works, car club, carbon offsetting, a s278 agreement and a construction stage ESP, contrary to Policies H3, TR1, TR3, TR4, TR5, H5, CC9 and the Affordable Housing and ESP SPD's.

3.8 Appeal (Ref: APP/E0345/W/20/3263270) dismissed 14/05/2021 following a Virtual Hearing on 24/03/2021. In dismissing the appeal, the Inspector stated in relation to the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area that:

“The new building would be substantially taller than the surroundings, particularly in relation to the west side of Caversham Road and Northfield Road where it would appear unduly tall, diverting attention from the street level to a new higher skyline. It would appear dominating and out of scale, more appropriate to an urban centre rather than a suburban location.

The perceived height of the building would also be emphasised by its narrow footprint. This would lead to a pronouncedly vertical orientated building.

The proposal would drop to 5 storeys towards Northfield Road. However even at that height it would appear out of context. Additionally, the seventh storey element behind would be visible from parts of Northfield Road” (Paragraphs 10-12)



Proposed East Street Elevation

Figure 7 - Dismissed at appeal Caversham Road (above) and Northfield Road (below) elevations



- 3.9 The Inspector also raised concerns with some elements of the detailed design, such as the elongated windows on the top two floors accentuating the perception of height, as would “eye-catching” window mullions (see figure 7 above). Another concern was the blank façade to the south (see figure 8 below), which the Inspector considered to lack relief and interest, making the building “*appear austere and overly dominant when seen from the south*” (paragraph 14). The Inspector concluded that “*the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area*” (paragraph 16), contrary to Policies CC7 and EN4, together with paragraph 127 of the NPPF.



Figure 8 - Dismissed at appeal south elevation

- 3.10 With regard to the effect of the proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset, the Inspector commented that:

“The existing building reflects the values of the Historic England Guidance, in particular, for its historic significance as an identifiable Victorian warehouse, built for the brewing industry and, aesthetic significance for its massing, form and in part detailing, as a landmark on a prominent corner. I therefore conclude that the building has significant significance as a non-designated heritage asset and its loss would harm the historic environment” (paragraph 28).

- 3.11 The Inspector clarified that the proposals would be in conflict with Policies EN1 and EN4, together with paragraph 197 of the NPPF. Noting that the proposals involved the demolition of the frontage building, but retention of the smaller office buildings, the Inspector specifically commented that, “*their architectural and historical value is largely as a whole, and the proposal would harm their group value*” (paragraph 25). The appeal decision is included in full as Appendix 11.

Nearby sites of relevance (80 Caversham Road, Vastern Court & Carters)

- 3.12 To the east of the application site at 80 Caversham Road (former Royal Mail site) outline planning permission (Reference 182252) was resolved to be granted (subject to conditions and the completion of a s106 legal agreement) at the Planning Applications Committee meeting on 30th March 2022, for:

Outline application considering access, landscaping, layout and scale for redevelopment proposal involving the demolition of all existing buildings and structures (Classes B1a & B2) and erection of new buildings ranging between basement and 2 - 24 storeys in height, providing 620 (72 x studio, 196x1, 320x2 & 32x3-bed) residential units (Class C3), office accommodation (Class B1a), flexible ground floor shop (Class A1), financial and professional services (Class A2) or restaurant/café (Class A3) uses, a community centre (Class D1), health centre uses (Class D1) and various works including car parking (94 spaces (70 at basement level)), servicing,

public and private open space, landscaping, highways, pedestrian and vehicular access and associated works. This application is accompanied by an Environmental Statement (amended description).

- 3.13 At the time of writing the legal agreement is in the process of being completed, so the application has not yet been formally determined by the local planning authority.
- 3.14 To the north of the 80 Caversham Road site, so to the north-east of the application site, is Vastern Court, Caversham Road (otherwise known as the Aviva site or Vastern Road/Court Retail Park) an appeal (Ref APP/E0345/W/21/3289748) under non-determination was lodged on 23/12/2021. The outline application (Ref 200328) was reported to Planning Applications Committee on 15/02/2022, whereby members resolved that had they been able to determine the planning application they would have refused outline planning permission. The application sought:

Outline planning permission with the details of access, appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved for later determination. A demolition phase and phased redevelopment (each phase being an independent act of development) comprising a flexible mix of the following uses, Residential(Class C3 and including PRS), Offices (Use Class B1(a), development in Use Classes A1, A2, A3(retail), A4(public house), A5 (take away), D1 and D2(communitiy and leisure), car parking, provision of new plant and renewable energy equipment, creation of servicing areas and provision of associated services, including waste, refuse, cycle storage, and lighting, and for the laying out of the buildings, routes and open spaces within the development, and all associated works and operations including but not limited to demolition, earthworks, provision of attenuation infrastructure, engineering operations.

- 3.15 The appeal was heard via Public Inquiry between April and November 2022. The recommendation by the Inspector and subsequent outcome by the Secretary of State is awaited at the time of writing.
- 3.16 To the north of the site at the nearby Caversham Road / Vastern Road roundabout a full application (Ref 221324) at the former 'Carters' site was resolved to be granted (subject to conditions and the completion of a s106 legal agreement) at the Planning Applications Committee meeting on 1st February 2023, for:

Redevelopment of 97a-117 Caversham Road, and associated land to the rear, to provide 60 dwellings, including affordable housing, together with associated access, parking and landscaping.

- 3.17 At the time of writing the legal agreement is in the process of being completed, so the application has not yet been formally determined by the local planning authority.

4. CONSULTATIONS

i) Internal and External consultees

1) RBC Transport

- 4.1.1 Transport officers advise that the development proposes to consolidate the existing vehicular accesses to the site into a single dropped kerb access on Northfield Road.

The design of the proposed access is acceptable and will be secured via condition. This will provide access to the 14 proposed parking spaces at the site. These are designed to serve both existing office occupiers and future residents and those associated with the proposed retail unit. More specifically, there are 5 residential car parking spaces (including 2 disabled bays), 4 office car parking spaces, 1 commercial car parking space and 4 retail car parking spaces. To meet the 10% Local Plan requirement a minimum of two of the parking spaces will be enabled for electric vehicle charging (and 2 further spaces future-proofed), with details to be secured via condition. The site is located within the Zone 2, the primary core area but on the periphery of the central core area which lies at the heart of Reading Borough. In accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and Design SPD, the development is required to provide 1 parking space per residential unit (29 spaces) and 1 space per 10 units for visitor parking (3 spaces). In terms of the commercial uses, the existing office buildings would require 1 space per 100m² (4 spaces) and A1 non-food retail use would require 1 space per 50m² (7 spaces).

4.1.2 The proposed parking provision is therefore below the Council’s requirements. However, given the site’s close proximity to the centre of Reading, its easy access to public transport connections and the facilities within the town centre, a lower parking provision can be considered. The surrounding road network all has parking restrictions preventing on-street parking too. Therefore, a reduction in the parking provision will not lead to on street parking being detrimental to road safety and is considered acceptable, subject to conditions to secure the parking as shown and guard against parking permits being gained on-street.

4.1.3 The reduced level of car parking provision for the residential units will also be supported by future occupiers having access to a car club scheme as part of the proposals. This will be in association with an existing car club operator in Reading, at this stage would either be on site or joining up with an existing nearby Central Reading car club, and will be secured in full via s106 legal agreement.

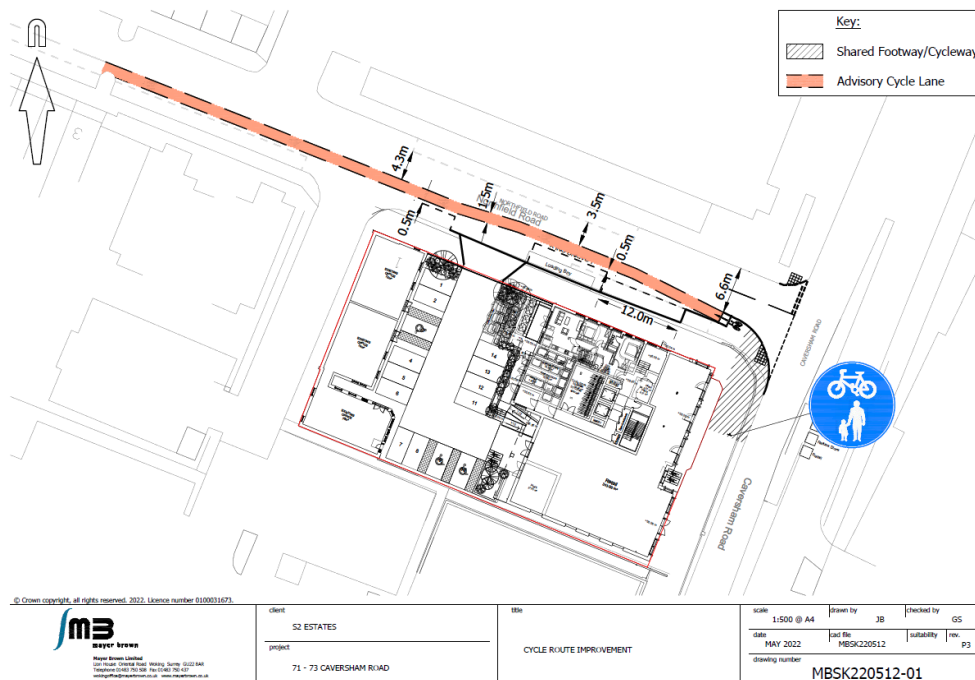


Figure 9 - Proposed cycle route improvements

4.1.4 To promote sustainable transport, the development also proposes cycle route improvements on Northfield Road, and a cycle parking provision that exceeds

minimum requirements. The proposals include the introduction of an on-carriageway dedicated cycle link along Northfield Road between the Caversham Road crossing and Swansea Road to the west (see Figure 9 above). This will provide connectivity to the northern entrance of the station connecting access to the town centre to the south and Christchurch Meadows to the north as well providing access to schools, leisure and employment in west Reading. This will require an agreement under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980, but in principle is welcomed and supported. Given the off-site location of these works they will also be required to be secured in full via s106 legal agreement. The highway works to be secured under s106 legal agreement will also encompass works to ‘stop up’ disused accesses onto Northfield Road, with the footway reinstated at these points.

4.1.5 The development will provide 30 cycle parking spaces for residents by way of double stacked cycle storage, located in a covered storage area on the ground floor and secured by controlled entry points. Also proposed are two Sheffield stands providing 4 cycle parking spaces for the other uses and visitors, which will be located in the car park. Furthermore, another two Sheffield stands providing 4 cycle parking spaces are proposed to the front of the retail unit on Caversham Road. This over-provision is welcomed and all cycle parking will be secured via compliance based conditions.

4.1.6 In terms of refuse collection arrangements, refuse vehicles currently service the existing residential and commercial properties on Northfield Road. The Council’s Waste department has provided comments on the level of bins required for the 29 residential units (see section 4.8 below). The waste collection crews will access the property through the electric gates and reverse up to the bin store area. All bins will be stored within 10m of the rear of the collection vehicle. From a transport perspective this on-site servicing would cause a temporary obstruction within the car park (see figure 10 below). However, it would only occur once a week for a short period of time and therefore would not unduly obstruct users of the on-site parking facilities. These waste storage facilities and arrangements will be secured via a compliance condition.

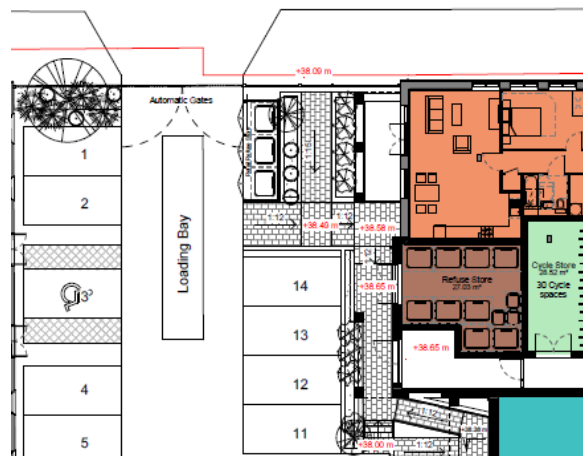


Figure 10 - On-site refuse facilities and collections

4.1.7 Turning to consider the servicing of and deliveries to the ground floor retail unit, this will take place from Northfield Road. To allow for this, a new loading bay is proposed along the site frontage, which will require a rearrangement of the on-street parking bays without any net loss in parking. This process involves changes to the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) which will require approval by the Traffic Management Sub Committee (TSUB) and will be subject to statutory consultation. Given TROs are considered under separate legislation to the Planning Acts there is a

possibility they may not be approved. However, any costs associated with the changes to the TRO and on-street signage and markings would have to be paid upfront by the applicant before commencement on site. From a Transport Planning perspective the on-street loading bay arrangement is a suitable solution, given it has not been demonstrated that deliveries to the retail unit could occur without causing obstruction to either the proposed car park or Caversham Road on a frequent basis.

- 4.1.8 A Demolition and Construction Method Statement will be required given the significant remodelling of the site proposed within this application. The proposed work should be in accordance with the Borough's Guidance Notes for Activities on the Public Highway. The Council's standard pre-commencement condition is recommended in this regard.
- 4.1.9 With the conditions and s106 obligations referenced above secured the proposals are considered acceptable from a transport planning perspective.

2) RBC Conservation and Urban Design Officer (CUDO)

- 4.2.1 The CUDO comments outline the background (including the dismissed at appeal scheme and subsequent pre-application discussions undertaken) and the legislative and policy context (national and local) for the proposals. In the interests of brevity, these are not specified within this report. The CUDO has commented on the significance of the existing buildings and the impact the proposals would have on these.
- 4.2.2 As a reminder, the site is a collection of locally listed commercial buildings (malting warehouses) from the 1870s, which were connected to a local brewery. The site is not in a conservation area. A previous scheme was refused and then dismissed at appeal, with the main issues detailed in section 3 above. The current proposal follows a series of pre-application discussions by the applicant with the local planning authority in 2021 and 2022, together with separate input from the Reading Design Review Panel (DRP - see section 4, part 17) below) in September 2022.
- 4.2.3 The existing buildings are considered to be of local significance, with the corner buildings (71-73 Caversham Road) originally being two malthouse warehouse buildings which formed part of Reading's important brewing industry. Externally, the northern warehouse building is reasonably intact, with good quality brick with 'burnt headers' in Flemish Garden Wall Bond, buff brick detailing over segmental windows and doors. On Northfield Road there also appears to be 'ghost' sign-lettering ('Smallbone') at first floor level. It is however acknowledged that there are later additions to the building and the roof has probably been replaced. The historical association with locally prominent businessman and brewer Henry Pendlebury Dowson between 1870 and 1900 is part of its importance, as is the original malthouse use giving it industrial and cultural importance in the town. Architecturally too, the building is representative of a commercial use and style that is significant to the development of Reading, with group value being derived from the survival of the buildings fronting Northfield Road too. This all cumulated in the buildings being locally listed, due to a combination of their age, architectural quality, landmark presence in the street scene and relationship to Reading's historic industries.
- 4.2.4 In terms of the impact that the proposals would have on the locally listed buildings, it is firstly acknowledged that the current proposals differ significantly to those

dismissed at appeal in 2021. In particular, it is no longer proposed to demolish the entirety of the 71-73 Caversham Road corner building, with the proposals now seeking to refurbish and extend a proportion of the northern warehouse building. Demolition is now only proposed to the southern half of the Caversham Road frontage, which historically was separate to the proposed retained/reconfigured building on the corner of Caversham Road and the entirety of the Northfield Road façade (see Figure 11 below). The CUDO’s site inspection in February 2021 identified that there was no significant remnants or detailing left on the inside of this building.



Figure 11 - Edited 1912-13 OS map showing separate buildings fronting Caversham Rd

4.2.5 In relation to the latest (as amended) scheme the most significant parts of the original warehouse buildings, on the corner of Caversham Road and Northfield Road, would be retained, which is a welcomed change in approach in comparison with the previous scheme. The extent of demolition is shown below in figure 12, which confirms that the Northfield Road elevation would remain, as would the first floor and roof of the northern half of the Caversham Road frontage. This includes the area where the ‘Smallbone’ ghost sign is located.

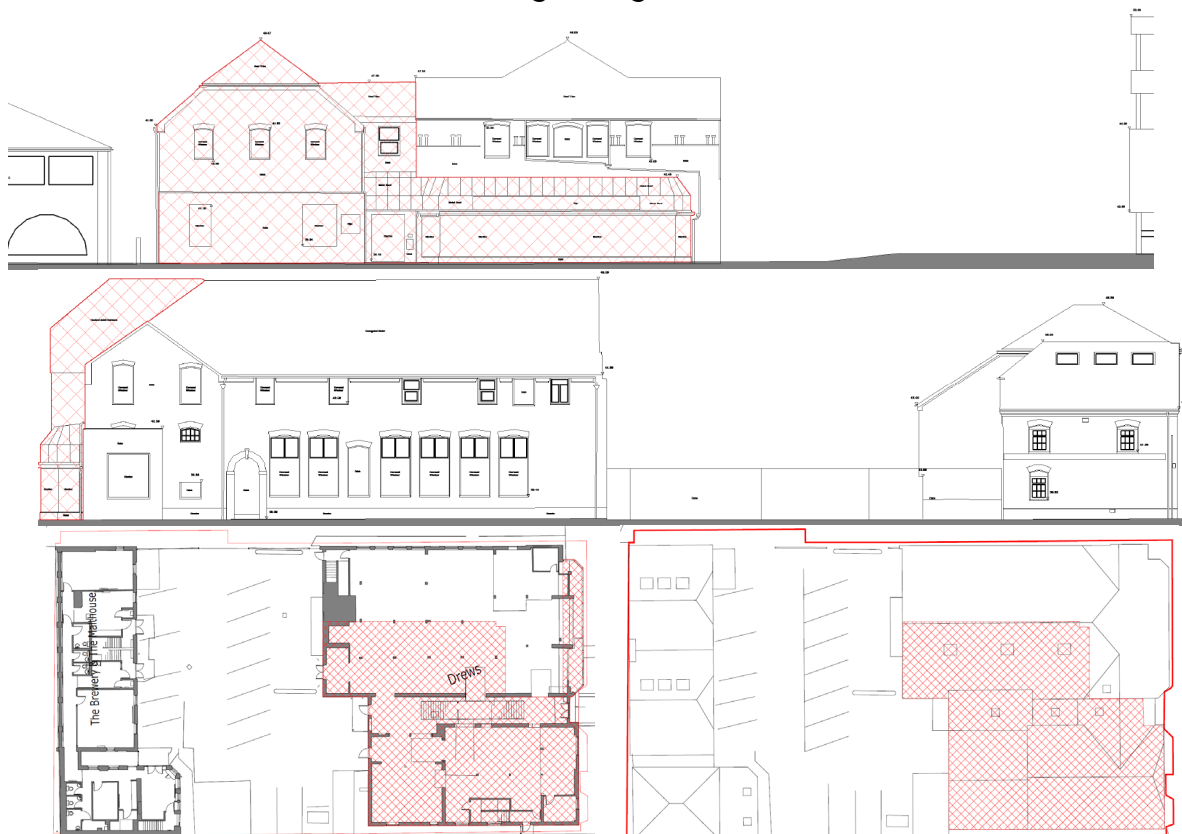


Figure 12 - Extent of proposed demolition hatched

in red (street frontages, ground and roof plans)

4.2.6 The applicant acknowledges (within the Heritage and Townscape Assessment) that some fabric would be lost to the front of the building, most notably the above ground floor level element of the southern building fronting Caversham Road. However, the applicant considers that the most significant and characterful portions would be retained. More specifically, the applicant considers:

- The historic character of the corner of Caversham Road and Northfield Road would continue to be readable.
- The relationship between the warehouse buildings to the Brewery and Malthouse buildings on the west side of the site would continue to be readable.
- Their former industrial relationship and ‘cultural contribution’ would substantially remain.
- The southern building has experienced considerable change over time and little remains of the original fabric which would be appreciated from the public realm. Historically the southern building had a far deeper footprint into the site and was divided from the building to be retained to the north. The infill to create the single composition fronting Caversham Road also altered the roof form. The ground floor shopfront has also been replaced.

4.2.7 With specific reference to the southern half of the site fronting Caversham Road, in pre-application discussions the applicant did explore options whereby the façade was retained. However, this was not pursued as the applicant considers it isolated in all directions by later interventions. The applicant considers that, if retained, it would either have to be entirely deconstructed for re-integration within a new building, which calls into question its authenticity, or entirely suspended in situ, as shown in visuals provided within the supporting Design and Access Statement (see figure 13 below)



Figure 13 - The southern half of the Caversham Road frontage and alternative proposals considered by the applicant.

4.2.8 Given the evidenced difficulties in practically and coherently incorporating this part of the existing building within a scheme of the nature shown, it is accepted on balance by the CUDO that this specific loss is accepted. In particular, the CUDO considers it pertinent that in itself this part of the building only has low significance as it is only a partial shell of the original, with no interior features remaining. Steps have been taken to include the most significant elements of the building into the proposed development. On balance, it is considered to have been done in a satisfactory manner.

4.2.9 Subsequent to the application being registered in August 2022 the proposals have been amended following input from the Reading DRP. This has simplified the

palette of materials but its massing has not changed. The CUDO has no objections to the changes made to the scheme following the DRP comments. In short, the CUDO has no objections to the design quality of the new build element in itself, in the context of the locally listed building and the streetscene, being generally in line with policies CR2 and CC7 in particular. For example, the proposed shopfront would represent a significant improvement in comparison with existing. While it is considered that the new works would have some impact on the buildings identified by the Local Listing, on balance when the proposal is viewed from Caversham Road, the northern warehouse is still a prominent element of the site and the new build is clearly seen as a later addition. The retention of the rear 2/3 storey buildings also help explain the earlier malting site configuration and they are an important contributory element to the significance of the site.

4.2.10 Therefore, with regard to the overall impact of the proposals on the significance of the locally listed buildings at the site, the proposed development, aligning with paragraph 203 of the NPPF, is considered to have “less than significant harm” on the non-designated heritage asset. In addition, the proposed design (following revisions) sufficiently and suitably incorporates the existing and proposed component parts into the streetscape. The proposed scheme is a clear improvement in terms of the refused and dismissed at appeal scheme in regard to heritage issues, with the proposals in themselves moreover considered to be accepted in regards to size, scale and materials on its own merits. Hence the CUDO supports the proposal and raises no objection to the level of demolition shown, subject to the following conditions:

- Pre-commencement level 2 photographic recording of the buildings for the Historic Environment Record (the HER)
- Pre-commencement, barring demolition, proposed material details, including for the brick bonding to be similar to the southern warehouse façade to be demolished.
- Ground floor shopfront details at 1:10 scale (expectation to comply with RBC Shopfronts SPD).
- Compliance condition relating to the retention of the ‘Smallbone’ ghost signage on the Northfield Road elevation

3) RBC Environmental Health - Environmental Protection (EP)

4.3.1 EP officers are satisfied that the submitted noise assessment is acceptable, with it providing detail regarding the level of mitigation in terms of glazing and ventilation required to protect the new occupants from noise. The details regarding layouts and proposed glazing are not yet available therefore will need to be secured via condition. In addition, EP officers have specific potential concerns about noise disturbance to future occupiers from deliveries and waste collections associated with the retail use proposed and the operation of the use itself. As such, an hours condition for deliveries and servicing between 8am and 8pm daily, and opening/operating hours being between 7am-11pm Monday to Saturday and 7am-6pm on Sundays and Bank Holidays are recommended to protect future amenity.

4.3.2 Turning to consider the development causing noise disturbance from plant, this is possible and given the detailed specifications of any plant have not been specified by the applicant it is considered that a mechanical plant noise assessment condition is necessary and required, with details approved prior to any mechanical plant is permitted to be installed.

4.3.3 With regard to air quality and the proposal’s increased exposure to poor air quality, the assessment submitted concludes that the air pollutants will be below the

objective limits, and therefore mitigation is not required. However, as the levels of NO₂ are not 'good', as they are up to 37.4 ug/m³ which is marginally below a cut-off point of 40, and ventilation will be required to the main facades to protect occupiers from noise, it is considered that air quality should be taken into account when designing the ventilation strategy to ensure that polluted air is not drawn into the properties. Accordingly, a pre-construction above foundation level condition is recommended to secure a mitigation strategy to protect the health of future occupiers from poor air quality.

- 4.3.4 Separately, in terms of the proposed development itself increasing emissions, EP officers are content with the conclusion of the assessment that there will not be a noticeable worsening of air quality as a result of the development and therefore no further assessment or mitigation is needed.
- 4.3.5 Given there is a known significant problem with rodent activity in Reading town centre a condition will secure details to ensure the proposed bin stores are adequately pest-proof.
- 4.3.6 Moving on to consider contaminated land matters, the preliminary assessment submitted itself concludes that an intrusive investigation is needed to assess the risks. Officers concur and hence the standard four stage contaminated land based conditions (1. Site characterisation; 2. Remediation scheme; 3. Validation report; 4. Reporting of unexpected contamination) are recommended, with the first two components being prior commencement conditions.
- 4.3.7 With regard to the demolition and construction phases of development, dust, noise and pest control measures are recommended within the demolition and construction method statement condition suggested by Transport. Standalone compliance-worded conditions are recommended too in terms of hours of working and there being no burning of materials on site, all to protect nearby amenity.

4) RBC Valuations

- 4.4.1 At the outset of the application the applicant sought to justify, through a viability submission, a zero on-site provision of affordable housing. Notwithstanding this position, the applicant offered to provide a commuted sum payment-in-lieu towards affordable housing of £165,000. The applicant also indicated a willingness to enter into an early-stage review mechanism post-decision, which would enable the amount of affordable housing to potentially increase up to a compliant tenure mix, subject to future viability and delivery timescales. The applicant considered that the provision of any contribution towards affordable housing would exceed what the scheme was required to provide, owing to the financial viability position submitted.
- 4.4.2 In assessing the principles and details of the viability submission, a number of areas of disagreement with the applicant's established position were identified by RBC Valuations. As such, the original offer by the applicant, as outlined above, was not agreed as making an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading Borough. RBC Valuations advised the applicant that it would be reasonable and necessary, in the context of the RBC assessment of the viability context, for a minimum of 4 on-site affordable housing units (equating to a 13.79% on-site provision). The remainder of the Policy H3 30% requirement was suggested by RBC Valuations to be provided via a suitable Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution Mechanism (with parameters which differed from those suggested by the applicant specified by officers), as secured via s106 legal agreement.

- 4.4.3 On the basis of these discussions the applicant altered its original affordable housing offer, introducing the provision of 4x1-bed shared ownership units on-site at first floor level. Factored into this offer was a proviso that should there be no credible interest in the on-site units, a s106 legal agreement secured cascade mechanism would permit converting the on-site provision into an equivalent financial payment of £165,000. In that scenario the shared ownership units would revert to market sale units. Responses were provided seeking for alternative inputs to any Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution Mechanism, not agreeing with those specified by RBC Valuations.
- 4.4.4 In response to the revised offer by the applicant, RBC Valuations advised that whilst the inclusion of 4 on-site affordable units was broadly welcomed and considered reasonable in the circumstances of viability, the financial contribution as part of the cascade secured within the legal agreement was considered to have been significantly undervalued by the applicant. Furthermore, there were continued disagreements regarding the parameters of any Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution Mechanism.
- 4.4.5 The applicant subsequently submitted responses which, in summary, continued to seek to justify the previously proposed £165,000 cascade payment and that the RBC Valuations suggested Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution Mechanism could not be agreed. Officers rebutted the response by the applicant and simply advised that, given the on-site provision of affordable housing was below the 30% policy requirement, the scheme would not be able to progress positively without a Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution Mechanism being secured. Furthermore, the applicant was advised that any cascade payment for the proposed 4 on-site units should total £292,672, rather than the £165,000 offered. At this juncture the applicant advised that the scheme would not receive funding (and therefore not proceed) if the late-stage review detailed by officers was secured. Discussions thereafter occurred regarding various different scenarios, with view to arriving at a mutually agreeable position. These negotiations cumulated in the applicant subsequently revising the proposed affordable housing offer to the following:
- The provision of 8 on-site shared ownership affordable housing units (6x1-bed at first floor level - including 1 wheelchair unit - and 2x2-bed - one each at ground and first floor level. This amounts to a 27.59% on site provision.
 - A payment-in-lieu commuted sum towards affordable housing of £58,400 (which is the equivalent of a 0.7 units / 2.41% contribution towards affordable housing, as agreed with RBC Valuations)
 - The provision of a cascade mechanism should the affordable housing not be disposed of (to first a Housing Association (HA) or Registered Provider (RP), or then the Council) the affordable housing contribution transfers to a commuted sum financial contribution of £585,344 (as agreed with RBC Valuations), with the on-site units then no longer required to be provided as on-site affordable units.
- 4.4.6 The proposed offer therefore amounts to 30% of the dwellings being in the form of affordable housing, with 27.59% (8) on-site units and 2.41% via a commuted 'top-up' financial contribution (0.7 units) of £58,400. A possible future scenario if the affordable units are not disposed of has also been agreed, amounting to a financial contribution of £585,344. Given the proposed offer, there is no requirement for a Deferred Affordable Housing Contribution Mechanism, as in either case, the scheme is fully policy compliant.

4.4.7 Set within the context of local policy requirements and the originally proposed affordable housing offer by the applicant, the subsequently negotiated position is considered to be a substantial offer by the applicant. The proposed offer exceeds the viability position evidence presented by the applicant, with the applicant evidently recognising the strong local policy requirements for on-site affordable housing in the Borough. Even if no HA, RP or the Council takes on the on-site units, the cascade mechanism securing a financial contribution of £585,344, together with the upfront payment-in-lieu of £58,400, would exceed the original offer or that proposed during the application prior to the now proposed offer. As such, in this particular instance, the proposals are considered to exceed what is considered to be an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing from an RBC Valuations perspective. The fully policy compliant level of affordable housing is therefore supported and welcomed.

5) RBC Housing

4.5.1 As a starting point, for any proposal seeking to create 29 residential units, the 30% Policy H3 requirement for affordable housing equates to 8.7 residential units. In practice, this would comprise 8 on-site units, with a financial contribution making up the remaining 0.7 of a unit requirement. Of the 8 on-site units, at least 5 would be required to be rented and no more than 3 shared ownership to comply with the Affordable Housing SPD tenure mix requirements. Set within this context, it is strongly supported that the overall provision of affordable housing, as proposed during the course of the application, amounts to the full 30% requirement. This comprises 8 on-site units, with the 0.7 shortfall topped up via an appropriate (as per guidance from RBC Valuations, as per section 4.4 above) financial contribution of £58,400. The proposal will therefore provide an appropriate headline figure contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of the Borough.

4.5.2 In terms of the specific nature of the on-site provision itself, RBC Housing is disappointed that the proposed tenure offered is entirely shared ownership, given the Affordable Housing SPD requires a tenure split of at least 62% rented and no more than 38% shared ownership. However, it is acknowledged that the provision of rented units in the scheme would worsen the viability position. Furthermore, it is accepted that there would be practical challenges incorporating rented units into the scheme, given the general preference to avoid service charges associated with the block and differing management requirements, meaning in practice rented units would typically expect to be separately accessed from the remainder of the units. In addition, it is acknowledged and considered that this site providing solely shared ownership units is likely to be a more attractive proposition for a HA or RP in terms of site management than the development incorporating both rented and shared ownership units. This is solely considered the case when the total number of units involved is relatively low from the perspective of a HA or RP, as would be the case in this specific instance. As such, providing that all other matters are secured as proposed, it is considered that RBC Housing would be content to support solely shared ownership units given the particular circumstances of this case.

4.5.3 In terms of the mix of unit sizes proposed, it is welcomed that a combination of 1 and 2-bed units are proposed, with the greater number of 1-beds (6) than 2 beds (2) aligning with figure 4.6 within Policy H2, where within the overall affordable tenure the greatest requirement is for 1 bed units. The inclusion of 1 of the 1-bed units being a wheelchair unit is welcomed too. Given only a single 3-bed unit is proposed in the scheme as a whole, it is accepted that the largest unit should be for market sale, given that the greatest need for market housing are 3-bed units.

Accordingly, the unit sizes of the shared ownership units is broadly welcomed in aligning with the Policy H2 needs.

- 4.5.4 It is essential for the 8 on-site affordable housing units and commuted sum of £58,400 to be secured via legal agreement, together with a cascade should a HA or RP not be found to take on the units. The cascade would require the applicant to fully evidence its attempts to identify a partner, with the Council then providing assistance in this process or for the Council to purchase the affordable housing units. Should this not occur then the affordable housing contribution shall transfer to a financial contribution towards affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough, which RBC Valuations have negotiated as being £585,344 (see section 4.4 above). Given the above, it is confirmed that no deferred affordable housing contribution mechanism is considered to be required in this case.

6) GS Ecology (RBC Ecology consultants)

- 4.6.1 GS Ecology advise that the bat survey report has been undertaken to an appropriate standard and concludes that the building is unlikely to host roosting bats. In addition, the Preliminary Ecological Appraisal concludes that once conditions are put in place to protect nesting birds and mammals during construction, the proposals are unlikely to affect protected species or priority habitats. As such, since the proposals are unlikely to affect bats or other protected species, there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

- 4.6.2 Furthermore, in relation to the proposed works, a biodiversity net gain calculation has been undertaken and concludes the development will result in more than 10% net gain in habitat units. A number of biodiversity enhancements are proposed, including a biodiverse roof and limited planting on the roof terrace and around areas of hardstanding. It therefore seems reasonable to assume that the proposals will result in a net gain for biodiversity, although a greater than presently shown quantity of trees and planting would nevertheless be welcomed. Accordingly, in addition to the landscaping details to be secured via condition (see Natural Environment Officer comments below at section 4.7), a separate condition should be secured to ensure wildlife enhancements, in particular swifts, are provided within the new development. This aligns with paragraph 180 of the NPPF, which states that “opportunities to improve biodiversity in and around developments should be integrated as part of their design”. Further compliance conditions are also recommended to protect nesting birds during partial site clearance works and wildlife during the construction phase of development. Subject to these conditions there are no objections to this application on ecological grounds.

7) RBC Planning Natural Environment

- 4.7.1 Given the site is within a low canopy cover area (as per the RBC Tree Strategy) and an air quality management area, it is a location where sufficient greening is of importance as part of any development.

- 4.7.2 It is recognised that the landscaping includes several trees within the ground floor parking courtyard, additional planting at ground floor level to the rear of the main building, a communal roof terrace and a biodiverse roof. This is all positive and will increase green provision compared to existing. The green wall elements provided on the Caversham and Northfield Road elevations under the previous application are no longer included. It is acknowledged that the partial retention of the original building accounts for this, although it no longer being incorporated is regrettable. This could have potentially contributed to a landscape-led SuDS approach, which

the proposal also disappointingly lacks. However, in the context of the existing site the proposals are considered appropriate in principle from a landscaping perspective, with there being no objections subject to conditions securing full hard and soft landscaping and boundary treatment details.

8) RBC Waste Services

4.8.1 Initial comments on the proposals raised concerns in relation to an inadequate on-site provision of bins for the number of residential units proposed. Concerns were also raised in relation to the collection distances being in excess of the 10m requirement. The applicant submitted revised plans showing an increased number of bins and collections taking place from the on-site car park, thereby addressing the original concerns raised. As such, both the quantum of bins and the collection arrangements is now acceptable to RBC Waste Services.

9) RBC Access Officer

4.9.1 The RBC Access Officer raised a series of initial queries and comments on the proposals from an access perspective, which the applicant duly responded to. In summary queries were raised in relation to:

- the gradient of the external ramps within the car park leading to the building;
- wheelchair user dwellings not being on the ground floor (they are proposed at first and fifth floor level);
- the lack of a shelter or car port for the two wheelchair user car parking spaces proposed
- queries over how accessible the amenity spaces are for wheelchair users
- comment that the rooftop terrace should include a range of seating types, suitable for wheelchair users

4.9.2 The applicant provided clarification regarding the ramp gradients (1:15), which the Access Officer confirmed were welcomed and satisfactory. The applicant sufficiently demonstrated that it was practically challenging to provide a ground floor wheelchair unit, with the two units provided accessed via the two lifts proposed. The Access Officer does not object to the proposals on this basis. The applicant has explained that the provision of a parking shelter was discounted on space grounds, which would negatively impact on the layout and amount of soft landscaping possible. The Access Officer is disappointed in this regard. In terms of the amenity space for wheelchair users, the applicant has explained that the proposed fifth floor unit includes a balcony, with the first floor unit not having a dedicated space, but would have access to the communal rooftop terrace proposed. The Access Officer welcomes that all occupiers have scope to access amenity spaces and welcomes the applicant stating that seats with and without arms and at different heights can be secured via condition (Planning Officer note: this would be secured within the hard and soft landscaping details, as per the Natural Environment Officer comments at section 4.7 above).

10) RBC Leisure

4.10.1 As with all town centre developments, and this is no exception, there is very limited open space on site for residents, with 70m² equating to less than 3m² per unit. The proposal does not provide meaningful recreational open space and the delivery of adequate on site open space is not achievable.

4.10.2 RBC Leisure therefore seek an off-site financial contribution in order to mitigate the additional pressure on local parks and recreation facilities as a direct consequence of this development. This is in accordance with the Local Plan, Policy EN9 which states that *“All new development should make provision for appropriate open space based on the needs of the development. This can be achieved through on or off-site provision, contributions toward provision or improvement of existing leisure or recreational facilities.”* Policy CC9 sets out the objectives of securing infrastructure, services, resources and amenities to ensure that developments are both sustainable and that they contribute to the proper planning of the area. It also provides the basis for justifying infrastructure provision as part of development proposals.

4.10.3 The added pressure from an increase in the number of residents moving into new developments increases the wear and tear on the existing infrastructure. It is considered that a contribution of £2,100 per unit is appropriate and is fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind. It is also directly related to the development. This S106 funding, which equates to £60,900 and which is in addition to CIL funding, would be used to continue to improve and extend facilities within the Thames Parks (including Caversham Court Gardens and Allotments) and Great Knollys Street Recreation Ground, which are in close proximity and would serve the development.

11) RBC Lead Local Flood Authority

4.11.1 The proposed drainage scheme significantly reduces surface water run-off. As such, there are no SuDS based objections subject to planning conditions. The first condition would be pre-commencement, securing a fully detailed SuDS strategy (as insufficient details have been received at this juncture). The second condition would effectively ensure the details in the first condition are completed prior to first occupation.

12) Reading’s Economy & Destination Agency (REDA) (formerly Reading UK CIC)

4.12.1 REDA note this important mixed use redevelopment near to the town centre will include 297sqm of Retail Class E (a) space, which is welcomed to help ensure commercial use of property along Caversham Road, one of the town’s most important transport hubs. In addition it will provide new residential space in easy reach of the centre.

4.12.2 Due to the extent of the redevelopment REDA would expect the applicant to enter into an Employment and Skills Plan, as required by the Supplementary Planning Document dated April 2013. Alternatively the applicant may prefer to make financial contributions in lieu of a plan to deliver training and recruitment programmes which benefit local residents.

13) Environment Agency (EA)

4.13.1 The EA replied advising that the planning application is for development the EA does not wish to be consulted on.

14) Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Service

4.14.1 Comment that whilst there is no duty placed on the Fire Authority to comment and that comments should not be taken as formal approval, the plans have been briefly examined and the following is noted:

- Access for fire-fighting, particularly vehicular access, must comply with Part B5 of the Building Regulations guidance.
- Structural fire precautions and all means of escape provision will have to satisfy Building Regulation requirement.

15) Delva Patman Redler Chartered Surveyors (DPR) (Light consultants for RBC)

4.15.1 DPR undertook an independent review of the daylight, sunlight and overshadowing components of the development (report by Calford Seaden) on behalf of the local planning authority. A summary of DPR's conclusions on the assessment by the applicant are:

- 73% of the 66 proposed habitable residential rooms will satisfy or exceed the minimum recommended daylight illuminance targets;
- 90% of the 29 units tested (those with a window facing within 90 degrees of due south) will satisfy or exceed the recommended sunlight exposure targets.

4.15.2 DPR advises that the main causes of the poorer daylight results are mainly due to windows beneath balconies having a more limited view of sky, or units having rooms set behind semi-enclosed recessed balconies (e.g. units fronting onto Caversham Road). DPR points out that the balconies do, however, provide private amenity space for the dwelling above. DPR considers that overall, the development appears to provide a satisfactory level of adherence to daylight guidelines. With specific reference to the daylight results, DPR qualify this by detailing that *“Whilst this is a satisfactory level of adherence for a development in this location, the adoption of light finishes [white-painted rooms, no furniture, etc.] mean these are best-case results. If the developer delivers units with darker finishes, the number of rooms achieving the minimum target illuminance would be lower and fewer rooms would achieve the recommendations”*.

4.15.3 In terms of the impact on existing/future neighbouring occupiers, the assessment has appropriately considered Monmouth Court (to the west) and the (at the time of writing) current planning application at 80 Caversham Road (see relevant history section above for details). DPR concludes that the daylight and sunlight results indicate that the proposed development will not have a material effect on Monmouth Court or the proposed scheme at 80 Caversham Road.

4.15.4 The review also raised three main points of clarification, in relation to: whether balcony balustrades were included in the calculations; the parameters behind the average daylight factor and daylight illuminance assessment, and; queries over the provision of clear window location plans showing neighbouring windows assessed. All three matters were clarified by the applicant, with DPR subsequently being satisfied in all regards and concluding that:

“The assessment has been undertaken in accordance with the 2022 published guidelines and reasonable parameters have been used to evaluate the daylight and sunlight levels to the proposed habitable units.

The additional information provided addresses the clarifications raised during the initial review, and the scheme will only have a negligible effect on the neighbouring properties in daylight and sunlight terms”.

16) Element Energy (Energy consultants for RBC)

- 4.16.1 Element Energy undertook an independent review of the sustainability and energy components of the development on behalf of the local planning authority. The proposed strategy by the applicant can be summarised as:
- A communal heat distribution network, using a centralised air-source heat pump - led approach to supply the residential part of the development.
 - The provision of on-site renewables in the form of rooftop solar photovoltaics
 - The inclusion of high energy efficient building fabric and building services to reduce carbon emissions and energy demand through good practice passive and energy efficiency measures
 - In total, the combination of measures is anticipated by the applicant to achieve an 89.4% reduction in CO2 emissions, in comparison to a Building Regulations Part L compliant baseline.
 - Air-to-air heat pump technology shall supply space heating and hot water to the retail non-residential development, utilising a variable refrigerant flow (VRF) system
 - The non-residential element of the development is designed to achieve a BREEAM “Very Good” accreditation.
- 4.16.2 Element Energy’s original conclusion specified that the scheme was not policy compliant, for the following overarching reasons:
- A communal heat distribution network that is compatible for connection with a future Reading-wide district heating network hasn’t been provided.
 - Lack of evidence (technical analysis) to support why ground source heat pump (GSHP systems have been discounted and air source systems (ASHP) have been selected.
 - The BREEAM pre-assessment, whilst exceeding the 55% threshold for BREEAM “Very Good”, only provides a buffer of 0.8%, below the accepted threshold of a 3%-5% buffer as expected by BREEAM to allow for design changes and potential constraints identified during the construction stage.
- 4.16.3 Element Energy made a series of recommendations as to how the applicant could potentially address the various issues raised. The applicant duly submitted further information in December 2022 and January 2023, with this being re-reviewed by Element Energy. The follow up review confirmed that many of the matters originally raised had facilitated an adequate response by the applicant (e.g. improved BREEAM pre-assessment scores were suitably evidenced). Remaining concerns remained, predominantly concerning the suitability of the evidence for discounting closed loop GSHP, given SPD guidance prefers GSHP over ASHP systems. Upon further discussions it was agreed between the technical consultants that this could be further explored at the detailed design stage.
- 4.16.4 Accordingly, Element Energy subsequently confirmed that the proposals are policy compliant, providing a series of planning conditions and a s106 legal agreement securing a carbon offsetting financial contribution. In particular, the first energy strategy condition will include a specific commitment for the applicant to further investigate the provision of a ‘closed loop’ ground source heat pump system at the site. This will be in the form of a feasibility report, with consideration for space heating and hot water supply strategies that minimise peak load and thus centralised heat supply system capacity, with view to a closed loop ground source heat pump system being provided instead of the presently proposed air-source heat pumps. With the conditions and legal obligation secured Element Energy confirmed contentment with the proposals from a sustainability and energy perspective.

17) Reading Design Review Panel (DRP)

4.17.1 The proposals were considered by the Reading DRP on 22nd September 2022 (during the course of this application). A summary of the subsequent DRP written comments are:

- “The design [has] evolved [in the context of the area and previous proposals] by (i) suggesting that elements above the retained facade should be metal framed with east facing winter gardens to provide external space and acoustic buffers to the interiors, (ii) that a red brick tower should sit behind the retained building, (iii) that buff brick ‘intermediate’ elements should be inserted between the grey metal winter gardens and the red brick tower. This ‘mixed’ approach was questioned by the panel (elements in [brackets] added for clarification by officers).
- There was no evidence presented of how the scheme addresses issues of sustainable design and carbon/energy/circular construction initiatives.
- There was no consideration of the wider issues of the natural environment on the site and its biodiversity.
- Diagrams showing sun angles and improvement in the daylight available to the rear of the site were questioned by the Panel.
- The visualisations did not properly describe the differences between the retained brickwork and new brick. The panel insist that these differences will be apparent and should make a significant contribution to how the detailing of the final building will be designed.
- The introduction of ‘mixed’ materials throughout the tower building should be reconsidered and a simpler pallet used. Grey metal at higher levels above roofs, new red brick below carefully distinguished from the retained sections.
- DRP urge the applicant to adopt a bolder design, simplifying the materials choice and increasing the height if necessary to achieve more sustainable design and construction goals and making the clear distinction between both the scale and architecture of the new and retained parts.
- The Panel sympathised with the applicant over how the design evolution has compromised this redevelopment.

18) RBC Education, Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Thames Valley Police, Thames Water, SGN (formerly Scotia Gas Networks) and SSE (formerly Scottish and Southern Energy)

4.18.1 No responses have been received from these consultees. If any responses are subsequently received they will be set out in any update report.

ii) Public consultation

4.19.1 Notification letters were sent to nearby occupiers on 23/08/2022, with the statutory period expiring on 13/09/2022. Site notices were displayed at the site from 24/08/2022, expiring on 14/09/2022. A press notice was published on 01/09/2022, expiring on 22/09/2022.

4.19.2 One objection has been received from a resident at an Addison Road address, with the issues raised being summarised as follows:

- Height - the proposed tower block is still higher than any other building on this side of Caversham Road, particularly the fire station.

- Precedent - Concern the proposal would set a precedent between the railway embankment and the Caversham Bridge roundabout, especially given the potential redevelopment of the Carters site (*Officer note: each application is required to be considered on its own merits*).
- Opposes any building higher than the existing Shurgard building, owing to the low-rise character to the west and overshadowing of properties in Northfield and Swansea Roads. Reference to the 2008 Tall Buildings Strategy stating tall structures should not be developed here due to the nearby small scale residential areas, which development should instead respond to.

4.19.3 As part of the objection the following comments have also been made:

- heritage concerns about the original plans (*Officer note: i.e. the refused and dismissed at appeal scheme*) have largely been addressed.

4.19.4 The changes to the scheme since the original consultation were not considered of a nature or extent to warrant formal public re-consultation.

iii) Local Groups

20) Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC)

4.20.1 Reading CAAC objects to the application, summarised as:

- The proposal does not address all the criticisms of the dismissed appeal.
- The impact on the streetscene towards the railway bridge, including Caversham Fire Station remains negative.
 - The Inspector's criticism that the original proposal would be taller than the surroundings on the west side of Caversham Road and Northfield Road has partly been addressed by the reduction in height to a maximum of six storeys.
 - The Inspector's criticism that the blank southern wall with window outlines provided limited relief and interest remains, whilst noting the now proposed wall is not as tall. This will be particularly dominant on the street scene when approaching the site from the town centre along Caversham Road.
 - The proposal results in the removal of about 50% of the frontage to Caversham Road. More of the maltings should be retained. The proposal will result in the loss of the maltings closest to the railway line, possibly the oldest, so only one of the three will remain. Clearly this has a significant impact on the heritage asset itself, the setting of the office buildings to the rear and harm the group value of the site as a whole.
 - The proposed dormers in the roof facing Northfield Road are completely out of keeping with a maltings building and undermine its significance
- The impact on the residential properties at Barry Place has been completely ignored and should be assessed.

4.20.2 The CAAC, whilst objecting to the proposals in overall terms, also comments as follows:

- The impact on Northfield Road has been improved in this application and is well documented within the submission.
- The CAAC welcome the retention and re-use of the shell of one of the maltings, feature doorway on the ground floor and many of the windows particularly at first floor level.

- The future of the Smallbone ghost sign (on the Northfield Road) elevation has not been specified. The CAAC requests this to be retained as it records one of the uses of the building after it ceased to be a maltings. (*Officer comment: on the demolition plans submitted this façade is not specified as being demolished*)

21) Bell Tower Community Association

4.21.1 Bell Tower Community Association was formally consulted and no response has been received.

22) Caversham & District Residents' Association (CADRA)

4.22.1 CADRA objects to the proposals, commenting in full as follows:

“While this application seeks to retain a part of the Locally Listed building of significant historical interest, it removes 50%, makes out of keeping alterations and provides new build at 6 storeys which would dominate and detract from the maltings. The view onto Caversham Road is overly dominating, with loss of about half of the original frontage. The proposed dormers in the roof facing Northfield Road are out of keeping with a maltings building and undermine its significance. While some improvements are welcome we urge that the application should be refused in its current form”.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 16(2) and 66(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority to have special regard to the desirability of preserving a listed building or its setting or any features of special interest which it possesses.
- 5.2 Section 72 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 requires the local planning authority in the exercise of its functions to pay special attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of a conservation area.
- 5.3 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development', which means 'approving development proposals that accord with an up-to-date development plan without delay' (NPPF paragraph 11).
- 5.4 For this Local Planning Authority the development plan is the Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019). The relevant national / local policies / guidance are:
- 5.5 **National**
National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
The following NPPF chapters are the most relevant (others apply to a lesser extent):
- 2. Achieving sustainable development
 - 4. Decision-making
 - 5. Delivering a sufficient supply of homes

- 6. Building a strong, competitive economy
- 7. Ensuring the vitality of town centres
- 8. Promoting healthy and safe communities
- 9. Promoting sustainable transport
- 11. Making effective use of land
- 12. Achieving well-designed places
- 14. Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change
- 15. Conserving and enhancing the natural environment
- 16. Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

National Planning Policy Guidance (2014 onwards)

5.6 The relevant Reading Borough Local Plan (November 2019) policies are:

- CC1: Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
- CC2: Sustainable Design and Construction
- CC3: Adaptation to Climate Change
- CC4: Decentralised Energy
- CC5: Waste Minimisation and Storage
- CC6: Accessibility and the Intensity of Development
- CC7: Design and the Public Realm
- CC8: Safeguarding Amenity
- CC9: Securing Infrastructure
- EN1: Protection and Enhancement of the Historic Environment
- EN4: Locally Important Heritage Assets
- EN5: Protection of Significant Views with Heritage Interest
- EN6: New Development in a Historic Context
- EN9: Provision of Open Space
- EN10: Access to Open Space
- EN12: Biodiversity and the Green Network
- EN14: Trees, Hedges and Woodland
- EN15: Air Quality
- EN16: Pollution and Water Resources
- EN17: Noise Generating Equipment
- EN18: Flooding and Drainage
- EM3: Loss of Employment Land
- H1: Provision of Housing
- H2: Density and Mix
- H3: Affordable Housing
- H5: Standards for New Housing
- H10: Private and Communal Outdoor Space
- TR1: Achieving the Transport Strategy
- TR3: Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
- TR4: Cycle Routes and Facilities
- TR5: Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging
- RL1: Network and Hierarchy of Centres
- RL2: Scale and Location of Retail, Leisure and Culture Development
- OU5: Shopfronts and Cash Machines
- CR1: Definition of Central Reading
- CR2: Design in Central Reading
- CR3: Public Realm in Central Reading
- CR6: Living in Central Reading
- CR11: Station/River Major Opportunity Area

5.7 Reading Borough Council Supplementary Planning Documents

Topics

Affordable Housing (2021)
Design Guide to Shopfronts (2022)
Employment, Skills and Training (2013)
Revised Parking Standards and Design (2011)
Planning Obligations under Section 106 (2015)
Sustainable Design and Construction (2019)

Sites

Reading Station Area Framework (2010)

5.8 Other relevant documentation

DCLG Technical housing standards - nationally described space standard (2015)
BRE Site Layout Planning for Daylight and Sunlight - A guide to good practice (BR 209 2022 edition)
Reading Borough Council Tree Strategy (March 2021)
Reading Biodiversity Action Plan (March 2021)
Reading Open Spaces Strategy (March 2007)
Reading Open Spaces Strategy Update Note (January 2018)
The National Design Guide (2019)
The National Model Design Code (July 2021)
Historic Environment Good Practice Advice in Planning Note 2: Managing Significance in Decision-Taking (Historic England, 2015a)
Historic England Advice Note 7 (2nd edition) Local Heritage Listing: Identifying and Conserving Local Heritage (Historic England, 2021)
Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance (Historic England, 2008)
Guide to the Conservation of Historic Buildings (British Standards Publication BS 7913:2013, 2015)

6. APPRAISAL

The main issues are considered to be:

- 6.1 Land use considerations, including provision of affordable housing
- 6.2 Design and Heritage matters - including demolition, height scale and massing, design and appearance including detailed design, and effect on designated heritage assets
- 6.3 Quality of accommodation for future occupiers
- 6.4 Amenity impacts for nearby occupiers
- 6.5 Transport and Highways
- 6.6 Landscaping and ecology
- 6.7 Sustainability and energy
- 6.8 Flooding and SuDS
- 6.9 Other matters - S106, pre-commencement conditions & Equality

1) Land use considerations, including provision of affordable housing

Loss of existing use

- 6.1.1 In land use terms the starting point for the assessment of these proposals is to establish whether the loss of the existing lawful use of the building proposed to be partly demolished is appropriate. The existing retail warehouse use is considered to fall within the Class E use (most closely aligned to Class E(a) - display or sale of

goods), as per the 2020 amendments to the Use Classes Order. No Central Reading policy specifically protects retail uses outside of primary frontages (which the site is not within).

6.1.2 Officers are also mindful of NPPF paragraph 123, which states LPAs should support proposals to use retail land for homes in areas of high housing demand (discussed separately below, but in summary this is evident in Reading), provided this would not undermine key economic sections (which it is considered it would not) or the vitality and viability of town centres (which it is considered it would not within the context of the regional centre of Reading).

6.1.3 Moreover, the proposal would not result in the complete loss of retail use at the site, with the proposal actually involving replacement retail floorspace. Therefore the proposals involve the reduction in retail floorspace at the site, from 1,264.9sqm to 297sqm (a total reduction of 967.9sqm). The appropriateness of the proposed use is separately discussed below, but from a land use perspective there are no in-principle land use issues concerning the reduction in retail floorspace at the site.

Principle of residential use

6.1.4 The supporting text to Policy H1 confirms that there is a pressing need for additional housing in Reading and the surrounding area, which helps explain the policy requirement for on average 689 homes per annum in Reading Borough. Furthermore, Reading is a very tightly defined urban area, sites for new development are limited and there is a heavy reliance on previously development land. The proposed development, providing 29 residential units on brownfield land, would therefore contribute towards meeting this pressing need. For balance, it is also relevant to note that the December 2022 published Annual Monitoring Report (covering the period from 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022) confirmed that housing delivery was strong both in general terms and in terms of delivering affordable housing, with Reading having a five year housing land supply. Nevertheless, the principle of providing residential units at the site, according with Policy H1, is considered to be established.

Principle of retail use

6.1.5 The application proposes the retention/reprovision of 297sqm of retail floorspace (Use Class E(a)) at part ground floor level. The site is located within the Central Area boundary of Reading, but is not located within the identified Primary Shopping Area within the Central Area, where Policy CR1 states retail development will take place. However, as outlined above, this proposal is seeking the reconfiguration and adaption of an existing retail use at the site, thereby meaning that flexibility can be applied in terms of the retail floorspace being provided outside of the Primary Shopping Area. Moreover, paragraph 5.2.5 of the Local Plan states a key theme which underpins the Central Reading strategy “*is of a mix of uses across the central area, both vertically and horizontally*”. In this instance, the provision of a non-residential component within the scheme, in principle terms is considered to align with the general thrust of Central Reading policy and a retail use would also provide an active frontage along the street, assisting natural surveillance in the area.

6.1.6 It is noted that the applicant has specifically sought Class E(a) (retail) use at the site. The Class E use class has 11 separate parts, with it considered reasonable and necessary for a condition to secure the floorspace solely for Class E(a) use, as the

other Class E uses have not been assessed as part of this application and could have very different amenity and transport implications as the proposed use. Along similar lines, given the wide potential for different uses being permitted in the future under permitted development rights, a further condition shall prevent the conversion of non-residential floorspace to residential without separate permission from the local planning authority.

Residential Mix

- 6.1.9 The proposed dwelling mix is 23 x 1-bedroom units, 5 x 2-bedroom units and 1 x 3-bedroom unit, as detailed in figure 5 within section 2 above. This equates to 79.31% 1-bed units and 3.45% 3-bed units. Although a mix of 1, 2 and 3-bed units are provided, the proposals are evidently and significantly at odds with the guide within Policy CR6, which states a maximum of 40% 1-bed and a minimum of 5% 3-bed units should be provided.
- 6.1.10 However, the policy also references flexibility by stating the above guide should be followed, *“unless it can be clearly demonstrated that this would render a development unviable”*. The applicant is seeking to advance the proposal on this basis and has provided a series of viability-based information, both as part of the general viability position relating to affordable housing, and specific mix-based viability information as a result of concerns being raised by officers in this regard.
- 6.1.11 In short, the viability information provided by the applicant does evidence that altering the mix in respect of reducing the number of 1-bed units or increasing the number of 3-bed units would result in an overall reduction in number of units and, moreover, a reduction in the capital value per square foot within the scheme. The impact of amending the proposed scheme mix would be a worsening of the scheme viability position, effectively resulting in the significant reduction or even removal of the on-site affordable housing and financial contribution proposed, or potentially going as far as calling into question the deliverability of the scheme as a whole. The applicant also suggests that the central location and relatively small size of the site are other factors to support a deviation from the guide, but officers do not consider these factors to be of any particular merit in this case given that Policy CR6 is a central Reading specific policy already.
- 6.1.12 Consequently, it is the viability-based information provides a sufficient basis for taking an alternative approach to the normal mix guide within Policy CR6 in this specific instance. The proposed mix of dwellings would be secured via condition, as per the recommendation at the outset of this report. Nevertheless, the proposed mix is still viewed by officers as disappointing in itself and is considered to be a shortfall of the proposal when applying an overall planning balance to the scheme. That overall balance will be weighed and discussed at section 7 below.

Affordable housing

- 6.1.13 During the course of the application, the amount of affordable housing has increased from the originally proposed nil on-site provision to 8 x shared ownership units (6x1-bed units at first floor level and 2x2-bed units - one each at ground and first floor), representing a 27.59% on-site affordable housing contribution. Furthermore, a financial contribution of £58,400, accounting for the 0.7 of a unit / 2.41% is also proposed, meaning in overall terms the provision adheres to the 30% requirement specified within Policy H3. The on-site units and financial contribution would be secured in full via the recommended s106 legal agreement.

- 6.1.14 Set within a challenging viability position, as explained within the RBC Valuations comments at section 4.4 above, the policy compliant provision of affordable housing is considered to be an extremely positive outcome, going beyond a level of provision which can reasonably be provided. This has been possible in this specific instance as the applicant has specified difficulties with its funder in terms of agreeing to the Council's required deferred affordable housing contribution mechanism, which is typically required where the provision of affordable housing is below the policy compliant level. As such, in order to preclude the requirement for a deferred mechanism, the applicant appears to have chosen to increase the on-site provision to a policy compliant level, despite the viability evidence submitted. The result of these extensive negotiations is a policy compliant provision of on-site affordable housing, supplemented with the necessary financial contribution.
- 6.1.15 In this context, officers consider that flexibility can be applied in terms of the specific tenure split of the affordable housing component not according with the SPD requirements. As detailed within the RBC Housing comments at section 4.5 above, in this specific instance the provision of solely shared ownership units (therefore not including any rented units) is considered to be appropriate. In short, this is ultimately recognised as a result of scheme viability, which Policy H3 itself acknowledges. Put simply, any change in the package of affordable housing measures proposed (e.g. incorporating rented units on-site as well as shared ownership) would have a negative impact on the delivery of the scheme as a whole, perhaps even calling into question it occurring at all. In summary, officers advise that the proposed shared ownership offer should form an important positive component of the overall planning balance, which will be discussed further at the end of this Appraisal.
- 6.1.16 As with any on-site provision, a cascade mechanism is proposed to be included within the s106 legal agreement. In practice this ensures that if any of the on-site affordable housing units are not disposed of to a HA or RP (as very much anticipated), then a fallback position would be for the Council to assist in identifying a provider or purchasing the units. If relevant requirements are met to evidence that nobody is prepared to manage the affordable units, the on-site provision requirement would instead transfer to a financial contribution towards affordable housing elsewhere in the Borough, to the negotiated sum of £585,344.
- 6.1.17 In addition, a further affordable housing related clause is included within the s106 legal agreement in relation to the Council safeguarding its affordable housing position in the future. More specifically, it is contended that should the application site subsequently be extended/altered to create further residential units (e.g. conversion of the commercial ground floor or offices within the buildings fronting Northfield Road) or residential units as part of this proposed subdivided (e.g. a 2-bed unit becoming 2x1-bed units), then contributions to affordable housing would apply on a cumulative basis, rather than a standalone application basis. This is necessary due to Policy H3 requiring different levels of affordable housing depending on the number of units (thereby avoiding a succession of applications each having different affordable housing requirements, which if all submitted as one could generate a larger requirement. It is considered reasonable and necessary for this to be secured in this instance to ensure the site makes an appropriate contribution towards affordable housing to meet the needs of Reading. Such a clause has been included on other schemes in the Borough in recent years, including being accepted in an appeal scenario.

2) Design and Heritage matters - including demolition, height, scale and massing, design and appearance including detailed design, and effect on designated heritage assets

Demolition

- 6.2.1 Initially the proposed demolition works are considered, or more specifically the extent of demolition proposed in this instance. The proposals involve the retention of 'The Brewery' and 'The Malthouse' office buildings on the western side of the site and a significant proportion of the current building on the junction of Caversham Road and Northfield Road, barring the non-original ground floor shopfront and the southern half of the Caversham Road fronting building. The extent of demolition has already been summarised in section 2 above (visualised at figure 4), with this also shown in the context of the demolition plans submitted at section 4.2 (figure 12) within the CUDO observations. Furthermore, all of relevant visuals are combined at Appendix 2 at the end of this report.
- 6.2.2 In the previously dismissed at appeal proposals it was sought to demolish the entirety of the building on the eastern side of the site fronting Caversham Road and Northfield Road. In dismissing the appeal, the Inspector concluded at paragraph 28, as already detailed in section 3 above that *"the building has significant significance as a non-designated heritage asset and its loss would harm the historic environment"*. Taking this on board and seeking to address the concerns of the Inspector the proposals differ in seeking the partial retention / partial demolition of the building on the east side of the site. As the CUDO comments at section 4.2 above, the applicant explored retaining the whole building and the façade of the southern building fronting Caversham Road. However, this was discounted for practical and design-based reasons, which the Council's CUDO accepts. Furthermore, the retention of the characterful building on the corner of Caversham Road and Northfield Road is considered to retain the most significant part of the existing building (in the context of these historically being two separate buildings), in a genuine attempt to address previous concerns and bring forward a heritage and design-led approach in these proposals, whilst simultaneously achieving a financially viable proposal.
- 6.2.3 Given the application site buildings are locally listed, the proposals need to be considered against Policies EN1 and EN4. Policy EN1 seeks to ensure that assets on the Local List are protected and where possible enhanced. More specifically, there are two main tests within Policy EN4, namely that (1) the benefits of the development significantly outweigh the asset's significance in instances such as this where harm would occur and (2) that the development conserves, architectural, archaeological significance, which may include the appearance, character and setting of the asset. In terms of test 1, this requires a wider assessment of the application as a whole, which can only be detailed within the planning balance section of this report. As such, this is duly discussed separately at section 7. However, it is initially referenced, acknowledged and fully accepted that some harm to the locally listed buildings would occur, both individually and as part of the collective group value, as the proposals involve partial demolition, and furthermore the setting of the remaining buildings would change owing to the proposed development. Notwithstanding test 1 for the moment, in terms of test 2, the Council's CUDO comments at section 4.2 point to it being considered that the proposals do sufficiently conserve the architectural and historical significant of the asset, with the most important element of the existing building retained and incorporated into the proposed redevelopment proposal, with the rationale discounting the retention of the entire building being robust and acceptable to

officers. As such, test 2 of Policy EN4 is considered to have been met, with test 1 returned to at section 7 of this report.

6.2.4 As well as the local policy context, it is also relevant to note that the corresponding national policy position too, albeit this is not considered as stringent as the local policy context referenced above. Paragraph 203 of the NPPF requires a balanced judgement when weighing applications (such as this) that directly affect non-designed heritage assets (which locally listed buildings are), with regard required to the scale of any harm/loss and the significance of the heritage asset. In this case the CUDO considers that the scale of harm is less than significant, as detailed in section 4.2 above. In line with the Inspector's previous comments, it is echoed that the buildings have "significant significance". It is within this context that the required balanced judgement will be considered at section 7 of this report.

6.2.5 It is relevant to note at this juncture that any approval, as recommended, would include recording of all buildings at the site, in line with Historic England Level 2 recording. This dovetails with NPPF paragraph 205 and Policy EN4 and has duly been recommended by the CUDO. Moreover, it is also considered necessary to include a separate condition specifying that the partial demolition recommended shall not be undertaken before a contract for the carrying out of the works of redevelopment of the site has been made (with details submitted to demonstrate this to officers for approval to at least cover the demolition and shell and core stages of development - with the definition clarified through an informative). This is considered necessary given the potential risk of partial implementation of any permission, involving demolition works only, would cause a harmful impact in the street and townscape terms, while it would also prevent the unnecessary (in that context) partial loss of the locally listed building. Such an approach also follows recommendations detailed at paragraph 204 of the NPPF.

Height, scale and massing

6.2.6 Turning to consider the height, scale and massing of the proposed development, as identified at section 2 above, the scheme seeks a part 2 (and roofspace accommodation) storey building at the northern end of the site, rising to part 5 and part 6 storeys further south and fronting onto Caversham Road. It is initially noted that the proposed scale and massing significantly differs from that proposed as part of the previous dismissed at appeal scheme. At that time a part 5, part 7 proposal was sought (see figures 7 & 8 within section 3 above), which the Inspector criticised as appearing "*unduly tall*", "*dominating and out of scale*". The 5 storey element towards Northfield Road was also considered to appear out of context (see section 3 for more details).

6.2.7 The now proposed scheme has sought to positively respond to the Inspector's comments, with the overall height of the tallest element reduced by a storey (further reduced by the proposed flat roof design). Most significantly however, the retention of the 2-storey warehouse at the northern end of the site is considered to importantly signal a meaningful reduction in the bulk and massing, as well as the perception of bulk and massing across the site too. The comparative position is seen in figure 14 below, with additional visuals shown at Appendix 7 too. As such, the current proposals are considered to represent an extensive shift in approach by the applicant in this regard.



Figure 14 - Proposed scale and massing, with the comparative dismissed at appeal scheme outlined - please note that the proposed materials shown differ to those now proposed)

6.2.8 However, ultimately the proposed scale and massing needs to be assessed afresh on its own merits, against development plan policies. This assessment can be considered within the context of Caversham Road and then Northfield Road. Latterly, the transition between remaining and proposed component parts of the site need to be considered too. It is recognised that the site is located in a transitional area between low-rise residential terraces to the west and the larger scale commercial uses around Reading Station to the east (both as existing and possibly emerging, as per applications/appeals at sites to the east - see section 3 above for details).



Proposed Caversham Road Elevation

Figure 15 - Existing and proposed Caversham Road streetscene elevations - see Appendix 4 for slightly larger versions of the same plans

6.2.9 With this context in mind, it is acknowledged that along Caversham Road the proposals would represent a change in the scale and massing along the west side of the road. The openness of the site, when approaching from both the north and south means it could be considered to be sensitive to change. However, such a change is not considered to be harmful in this case and instead it is considered to sufficiently maintain and enhance the character and appearance of the area. While the prevailing scale of buildings along the west side of Caversham Road is acknowledged to be 2-3 storeys, and the overall proposed height at the tallest point being 6 storeys would be greater than the prevailing context, this greater height applies to only part of the frontage. Meaningful elements of this scale are set back from the Caversham Road frontage too, thanks to the retained corner warehouse which assists in assimilating the proposed scale into the streetscene. As a consequence, when considering the existing and proposed Caversham Road streetscenes (see figure 15 above), these demonstrate an overall height and scale which is not considered harmfully taller than the existing Shurgard warehouse to the north. The appropriateness of the proposed scale and massing is also assisted

by the detailed design approach, which is discussed separately in the subsequent sub-section of this assessment. It is also pertinent that the Council's CUDO raises no concerns with the proposed scale and massing (see section 4.2), with this also being the informed viewpoint of the Reading Design Review Panel (see section 4.17) too. In short, it is considered that the proposed massing assimilate satisfactorily into the streetscene.

6.2.10 Along Northfield Road, the retention of the corner warehouse means these proposals are a fundamentally different scheme to that previously dismissed at appeal. The scale and massing are considerably reduced and in themselves provide a suitable basis for stepping up in height to the 5 and 6 storeys proposed. These components being offset from the street frontage mitigate the potential harm and create a suitable transition at this point.

6.2.11 When the proposals are considered in an east to west context, as seen below in figure 16, whilst the proposals would represent a change when compared with existing, again this is not considered harmful. The width of the proposed car parking area and, in particular the set-back nature of the new-build elements, provide a suitable transition between the retained warehouse / new build inset buildings and the 2-3 storey retained 'The Brewery' and 'The Malthouse' buildings and the 3-storey Monmouth Court further to the west. The Inspector previously considered 5 storeys to be out of context along Northfield Road, but the setback of the now proposed height is considered to successfully mitigate the previous harm identified.



Figure 16 - Existing and proposed Northfield Road streetscene elevations - see Appendix 4 for slightly larger versions of the same plans

6.2.12 To the east the width of Caversham Road mitigates any harmful impacts in the change in scale with the existing (vacant) Royal Mail buildings, with this character subject to possible change in the future if the resolved to be granted / awaiting completion of legal agreement scheme at 80 Caversham Road (Ref 182252 - see section 3 above) is implemented with 8-storey buildings along the street elevation as proposed. In that possible future context, the proposals would reaffirm the existing transitional nature of the site.

6.2.13 In respect of the transition within the site between the retained 2-storey warehouse element and the part-5, part-6 storey new build element, the retention of the roof form (albeit reconfigured with the introduction of the dormers and rooflights) means that the two separate elements can be easily identified and understood in townscape terms, whilst simultaneously assisting in breaking up the mass. In addition, the detailed design (as discussed separately in the sub-section below) also helps illustrate the appropriateness of this relationship, which is important given the prominent corner plot, as shown below in figure 17 and Appendix 6.



Figure 17 - Proposed computer generated image from Caversham Road looking south-west showing the junction with Northfield Road

6.2.14 In respect of height, scale and massing matters, it is also relevant to reference that, in dismissing the previous appeal at the site, the Inspector raised concerns with the blank seven storey wall on the southern elevation, with this considered to offer very limited relief and made the building appear austere and overly dominant. Officers consider that this has been largely addressed in the now proposed scheme (as shown in figure 18 below), through a combination of a reduction in one storey, the provision of winter gardens fronting Caversham Road and the provision of lintel detailing within the detailed design. Although the provision of windows throughout this elevation would have addressed the Inspector's concerns in full, officers accept that this is not possible in this instance as the applicant is separately required, under Policy CR2f, not to prevent or cause unreasonable burdens on the future development of adjacent development sites. As such, there is an inherent conflict between ensuring the building does not appear overly dominant, whilst not compromising future neighbouring development.



Figure 18 - Dismissed at appeal south elevation (left) and as now proposed (right)

6.2.15 In overall terms the proposed height, scale and massing of the proposals is considered appropriate and is supported by officers on its own merits. In addition, the scheme is also considered to satisfactorily address the comments raised by the Inspector in dismissing the previous proposals at the site.

Design and appearance including detailed design

- 6.2.16 The proposals are considered to comply with the principles of both design-based Policies CR7 and CC2. Firstly, the proposed layout essentially follows the existing, thereby respecting the grid layout structure in the central area and utilising the street frontages as far as possible.
- 6.2.17 The scheme has evolved during the course of the application, following specialist design input from Reading DRP (see section 4.17). The DRP's primary concern related to the original inclusion of numerous proposed materials, with it suggested that a simplified palette should be used. The applicant duly considered this and has amended the proposals to remove the originally proposed buff brick (see Appendix 8) replaced with a red brick. This is considered to be a positive amendment to the scheme, demonstrating a more modest design response to maintain the emphasis on the retained warehouse building instead of drawing the eye to the new build component.



Figure 19 - Proposed Caversham Road (left) and Northfield Road elevations

- 6.2.18 The predominant proposed material of red brick is considered appropriate in providing continuity with the retained warehouse at the site. Linking back to policy EN4, the proposed brickwork would draw upon heritage elements of the previous/retained design, although as the supporting commentary explains, it is not proposed to replicate the existing brickwork. It is instead intended for the new brickwork to be darker than existing in order to clearly distinguish between the retained and proposed components. This is supported to avoid creating a pastiche, with the subtle change in brickwork colour providing both a welcomed contrast and simultaneously a link back to the original. It is considered that the proposed approach would work well, leading to a coherent design response and ultimately creating an attractive finished appearance at the site, demonstrating a heritage-led design approach. In particular, the connection and relationship between the existing retained warehouse, 'Malthouse' and 'Brewery' buildings at the site and the proposed building has been carefully considered and the design response is considered to be appropriate. As with all sensitive sites in the Borough, to ensure design quality, it is considered to be of fundamental importance for precise details of all external materials to be secured via condition, with this including the sample panels being installed on site prior to approval to demonstrate an appropriate relationship between the retained and proposed materials.
- 6.2.19 The proposals also pay special attention to the ground floor shopfront and entrances, with this presently being an element in particular need for improvement at the existing site. The proposed shopfront and ground level design include a number of welcomed features, such as stone framing, glazed green

bricks (as per the existing building) effectively acting as the stallrisers in the proposed shopfront design and blue brick banding above (see Appendix 6 for more visual details). The shopfronts will provide an active frontage, which will also assist with natural surveillance and reduce the fear of crime, with a condition ensuring the shopfront windows are clear of vinyls or shutters. In overall terms the shopfronts are welcomed in principle, with specific material details recommended to be secured via condition. The anticipated high-quality detailing to the shopfront also assists in creating a human scale for the development, thereby assisting the height, scale and massing justification referenced above.

6.2.20 On the upper floors there is considered to be scope to introduce a contrasting material to the brickwork, with a lightweight steel frame with fins serving winter gardens on the Caversham Road frontage, with the setback stair also being framed in this manner to provide a visual link back to an industrial past. The continuation of red brick however is also important on the upper floors in more closely linking the new build elements to the retained warehouse. This is particular the case when viewed from Northfield Road (see figure 20 below), where solely brickwork is proposed on the north (aside from the setback staircore not visible in figure 20) and the west (rear courtyard) elevations, with the courtyard elevation showing no decrease in design quality, as required owing to its visibility in the streetscape and the need for an overall high quality design response to be achieved.



Figure 20 - CGI from Northfield Road looking south-east
(outline of proposed massing of 80 Caversham Road shown in the background - ref 182252)

6.2.21 It is acknowledged that local groups (see section 4.20 and 4.22 above) raise specific concerns in relation to the introduction of dormers within the roofscape of the retained warehouse building fronting Northfield Road. Whilst these are acknowledged not to be particularly characterful of the historic use, when considered within the context of the proposals as a whole they are considered a relatively minor and modest addition and not one which significantly dilutes the character or appearance of the building. Their size is considered to align with the function proposed (serving living and bedrooms within residential units) and would not overly dominate the roofscape at this point (see figure 20 above). They also help in the transition between the original and new components of the scheme and are therefore considered to be satisfactory.

6.2.22 In dismissing the previous appeal proposal the Inspector raised concerns with some elements of the detailed design, such as the top two floors having elongated

windows and eye-catching window mullions and the narrow footprint leading to a pronouncedly vertical orientated building. The now proposed scheme represents a contrasting design response to the site which no longer includes the specific features specifically referenced by the Inspector. In particular, the retention of the warehouse on the Caversham/Northfield Road junction alters the emphasis of the design response, with a more restrained and respectful of the past design approach proposed too.

Effect on designated heritage assets

6.2.23 In terms of the effect of the proposals on designated heritage assets (i.e. statutory listed buildings or conservation areas for example, and specifically excluding non-designated heritage assets such as locally listed buildings, which are discussed separately within this assessment), the proposals are considered too distant from any for there to be an impact. More specifically, mindful of Policy EN5 where the site is within the view of acknowledged historical significance from McIlroy Park, the proposed scale, massing and design approach is not considered to harm this view.

3) Quality of accommodation for future occupiers

Residential

6.3.1 The internal layout of the proposed units are arranged so as to create a suitable standard of living accommodation for future occupiers. The majority of the units are regularly shaped and sized, with all bedrooms and overall flat sizes complying with the nationally-described space standards, despite Policy H5 specifying this does not apply within Central Area locations such as this. Some initial concerns were raised in relation to the internal layout of Unit 202 at second floor level, as it is located within the roofspace of the existing building on the corner of Northfield Road and Caversham Road. It was originally proposed that both bedrooms would be served solely by rooflights, but following officer feedback the unit has been altered to a 1-bed unit, with all habitable rooms being served by conventional windows/terraces. No single aspect north-facing units are proposed (which are sought to be avoided where possible owing to a lack of direct sunlight), with the majority of units being dual aspect in nature, which is welcomed. No single-aspect south-facing units are proposed either, reducing the potential for units to suffer from overheating.

6.3.2 The proposed vehicular and cycle parking is considered acceptable, subject to compliance conditions and the proposed car club being secured via s106 legal agreement, as detailed within the Transport comments at section 4.1 above. Future occupiers will also benefit from the cycle link proposed by the applicant on Northfield Road, which is considered a benefit of the scheme. Refuse storage facilities are also considered appropriate and will be secured via a compliance condition. Therefore from a transport perspective the proposals include tangible benefits.

6.3.3 All units barring two include individual external amenity space, either as external balconies or winter gardens fronting Caversham Road. This is welcomed in providing future residents with the opportunity for a proportion of external space within the units. Furthermore, a shared rooftop terrace is also proposed at fifth floor level, with the applicant outlining that this would be for all future occupiers to use. Accordingly, the proposals provide a selection of on-site amenity spaces. However, as per the RBC Leisure observations at section 4.10 above, the proposal

does not provide meaningful recreational open space and the delivery of adequate on site open space is not achievable. The scheme is therefore required to make an off-site financial contribution towards improving and extending facilities within the nearby Thames Parks (including Caversham Court Gardens and Allotments) and Great Knollys Street Recreation Ground. The financial contribution amounts to £60,900 and will be secured via s106 legal agreement.

- 6.3.4 In relation to the other Policy H5 requirements, the Council's Access officer provided input on the accessible/adaptable/wheelchair user elements of the proposals, as summarised at section 4.9 above. Following some clarifications the Access officer is largely content with the proposals. Within the Design and Access Statement the applicant has outlined that 2 units (and including one shared ownership unit) will be wheelchair user dwellings in with M4(3) of the Building Regulations, and provided initial plans as to how this can be achieved. However, it is considered necessary and reasonable to secure full details via condition, which will ensure these are provided in practice and retained as such thereafter. In terms of all non-M4(3) units being accessible and adaptable in line with M4(2) of the Building Regulations, the applicant has not provided sufficient detail at application stage, so this will be combined into the above referenced condition in order to ensure the proposals comply with both Policies H5e and H5f. The water and energy components of Policy H5 are separately discussed in the sustainability and energy section below.
- 6.3.5 In terms of overlooking between the proposed units (as per Policy CC8), this would be possible between the proposed balcony/wintergarden spaces between some individual units. While a form of boundary treatment is denoted on the floor plan, the detail as to whether this constitutes a privacy screen has not been demonstrated. As such, this detail will be secured via a pre-occupation condition to protect the amenity of future occupiers.
- 6.3.6 With regard to daylight, sunlight and overshadowing matters for future occupiers, Delva Patman Redler undertook an independent review of the report submitted (see section 4.15 above). Whilst not all of the proposed units would satisfy the BRE guidance in terms of daylight and sunlight, this is largely a result of the proposed balconies. There is consequently an inherent conflict between providing private amenity space for future occupiers, but this compromising to an extent the daylight and sunlight levels experienced within the units. DPR considers, based on their experiences, that in overall terms the development appears to provide a satisfactory level of adherence to daylight guidelines. Given the urban nature of the site, the benefit of rooms being set off Caversham Road slightly and the provision of private amenity space, it is considered that some shortfalls for future occupiers in terms of daylight and sunlight can be tolerated in the scheme, with the majority of units adhering to the guidelines.
- 6.3.7 Turning to consider noise-based matters, a number of conditions recommended by Environmental Protection (see section 4.3) will ensure that future residents will not be significantly harmed in this regard. For example, the further noise assessment will ensure noise from Caversham Road will be mitigated, while the opening and servicing hours of the ground floor commercial unit will be restricted to protect amenity on the upper floors. Other Environmental Protection based conditions, such as in relation to air quality and contaminated land, would also protect the amenity of future occupiers too. In respect of all other Policy CC8 considerations the proposals are not considered to cause unacceptable living conditions for the new residential properties, with conditions securing further details in relation to external lighting and security for example.

6.3.8 In terms of fire safety, the proposal does not constitute a ‘gateway 1 building’, as although over 18m in height, no storeys include accommodation over 18m (the top floor is 16.7m). There is consequently no basis for requiring the submission of a fire statement as part of the application or consulting the Health & Safety Executive on the application. However, mindful of the sensitivities around this matter and the undeniable need to protect the future amenity of occupiers (and the general area), a pre-commencement (barring demolition) condition is recommended in this regard. This will require the applicant to submit a fire statement which details a strategy with suitable measures, which would then be required to be provided for prior to first occupation and then maintained as such thereafter. With this condition secured it is considered that amenity would be protected. In overall terms, subject to a series of conditions, the residential accommodation would be of a suitable standard.

Commercial uses

6.3.9 Considering first the proposed ground floor retail unit, the layout includes an expansive frontage onto Caversham Road, which continues around onto Northfield Road too. This will assist in attracting potential occupiers to the space in the future. The loading and servicing arrangements are proposed from Northfield Road, which is considered appropriate from a Transport Planning perspective. It is noted that this would require changes to a Traffic Regulation Order, which are dealt with under separate legislation to the Planning Act, but this does not prevent this planning application being determined. Suitable dedicated cycle and waste storage facilities are proposed to serve the retail unit and will be secured as such via condition. The proposed operating and servicing hours conditions are considered to strike an appropriate balance between being flexible enough to attract a wide variety of potential occupiers, without harming future residential amenity. In overall terms a suitable standard of accommodation is envisaged for future occupiers.

6.3.10 The existing office uses within ‘The Brewery’ and ‘The Malthouse’ buildings at the site would be able to function alongside the proposed development at the remainder of the site. Put another way, the proposed development at the site is not considered to unduly compromise the continued office use at the site, with noise and disturbance during partial demolition and building works managed through the demolition and construction method statement condition measures. In terms of overlooking and daylight/sunlight, the proposal would result in a worsening impact, but not harmfully so given the office use. The provision of 4 parking spaces is considered appropriate for the office use, noting that this is less than the offices will have experienced in practice since the closure of Drews in 2018. As such, a suitable standard of office accommodation would continue.

4) Amenity impacts for nearby occupiers

6.4.1 Considering first privacy and overlooking matters, the proposed dwellings are considered too distant from any existing or possible future residential units to result in a detrimental impact on the living environment of neighbours. The width of Caversham Road mitigates the possible future impact of this adjacent site to the east, while the non-provision of windows on the south elevation of the proposed building sufficiently future proofs the impact on possible future residential occupiers to the south should these sites come forward in due course. The existence and retention in office use of ‘The Brewery’ and ‘The Malthouse’ buildings on the western side of the site provides a visual barrier (as well as a

considerable physical distance) between the proposed building and the nearest residential properties to the west at Monmouth Court on Northfield Road. The generous width of Northfield Road means no significant overlooking issues would occur should the Shurgard site be redeveloped for residential in the future.

- 6.4.2 In terms of daylight, sunlight and overshadowing, the independent review by Delva Patman Redler (see section 4.15 above) confirms that the proposed development will not have a material effect on Monmouth Court or the proposed scheme at 80 Caversham Road.
- 6.4.3 With regard to visual dominance, overbearing and outlook implications, it is acknowledged that the proposals will result in an altered relationship for the existing low-rise residential areas to the west when compared with the existing experience. However, the location of the new taller element is limited to the south-east corner of the site, furthest away from the low-rise terraces to the west. Furthermore, the proposals need to be considered within the context of the anticipated scale and massing likely to emerge in time on the allocated site to the east (within a major opportunity area for the town). The proposed development would represent a transition down in scale from that likely in the future to the east. Moreover, on its own merits, the extent of visual dominance, overbearing and outlook implications for existing occupiers to the west caused by the proposed development is not considered to be of significant enough harm to warrant a sustainable reason for refusal of this application.
- 6.4.4 In relation to noise and disturbance matters, including vibrations and dust, fumes and smells, a series of conditions seek in part of in full to protect the amenity of nearby occupiers and users of the area from harm which could occur from the proposed development. This ranges from matters relating to opening and servicing hours, the restrictions on use of flat roof areas, a security strategy, a plant noise assessment and securing the hours by which demolition and construction works can take place. Collectively these conditions shall ensure no detrimental impacts from noise and disturbance would be likely to occur. In terms of the impacts from artificial lighting, the balcony railings and winter garden spaces will reduce this to an extent from within the proposed dwellings, while externally the intended lighting details within the parking area will be secured via condition.
- 6.4.5 In terms of crime and safety, despite being consulted no comments have been received from the Crime Prevention Design Advisor at Thames Valley Police (see section 4.18 above). It is noted that in the dismissed at appeal proposals the CPDA was satisfied subject to a condition being included to secure full and further details of the intended strategy. In the circumstances, it is considered necessary for submission of and approval of security strategy to be secured via condition. Whilst primarily for the benefit of future occupiers and users of the development, this will also assist the wider area too.
- 6.4.6 Whilst it is acknowledged that the CAAC (see section 4.20 above) considers that the impact on the residential properties at Barry Place (to the south-west) should be assessed, officers consider that these properties are too distant from the site, at a minimum 61m, for there to be a harmful impact.

5) Transport and Highways

- 6.5.1 In this regard the proposals are considered appropriate subject to conditions and s106 legal agreement requirements, as detailed at section 4.1 above. Furthermore, the quality of accommodation and amenity sections above have also

discussed a number of transport-based matters, such as parking, servicing and the construction phase. It is however considered pertinent to reiterate that the proposed scheme includes cycle route improvements along Northfield Road. This is welcomed and would assist connectivity to the northern entrance of Reading Station, alongside the anticipated works associated with the 80 Caversham Road scheme (see relevant history above). Such improvements would help promote sustainable transport in the Borough, with this being secured via s278/s106 legal agreement. The provision of a car club scheme is another welcomed element of the scheme from a transport perspective, with this again secured via s106 legal agreement.

6) Landscaping and ecology

6.6.1 In terms of landscaping the existing site lacks any form of soft landscaping, meaning that the introduction of a series of trees and planting at ground level, within the parking courtyard is welcomed as a positive addition. In addition, the landscaped communal roof terrace and biodiverse roof are welcome additions too. Mindful that the site is within a low tree canopy cover area and an air quality management area the proposals will increase this provision, as detailed in the Natural Environment officer comments at section 4.7 above. Whilst somewhat disappointingly the previously proposed green wall is no longer proposed, this is largely a result of the retention of part of the existing warehouse. In this instance officers conclude that the retention of the existing building at this point outweighs the possible inclusion of a green wall, given the range and nature of other soft landscaping works proposed at a site which is presently devoid of soft landscaping. In the context of an appropriate in principle scheme, details of the hard and soft landscaping will be secured via condition, as will boundary treatment details. This aligns with the Natural Environment officer comments at section 4.7 above.

6.6.2 In respect of ecology based matters, the LPA's ecology consultants GS Ecology firstly confirm (as per section 4.6 above) that species will be protected through the details submitted and those recommended to be secured via condition. Furthermore, it is confirmed that the proposed development incorporates a number of wildlife enhancing features to achieve a significant biodiversity net gain. A condition will secure full details of the measures to ensure the proposals are appropriate in ecology terms.

7) Sustainability and energy

6.7.1 As per section 4.16 of this report, Element Energy independently reviewed the sustainability and energy parts of the proposals. The submissions by the applicant indicate that the residential proposals, whilst not achieving zero carbon homes, would achieve an 89.4% reduction in carbon emissions, which is significantly above the SPD referenced minimum 35% improvement in regulated emissions over the Target Emissions Rate in the 2013 Building Regulations. This includes on-site decentralised energy provision, in the form of rooftop photovoltaics. Element Energy's original review raised a series of points which required further input from the applicant. The majority of these were satisfactorily addressed in due course, barring the justification for not bringing forward a closed loop GSHP system over the proposed ASHP system. It is considered that this specific matter can be further explored further through details secured via planning condition.

6.7.2 The final energy strategy, to be secured via two separate conditions (as per section 4.16 and the recommendation section of this report), will be likely to also facilitate a carbon offsetting financial contribution. This is owing to the scheme

not being zero carbon, albeit as outlined above the shortfall is minimal, meaning in practice the financial contribution would be likely to be modest. The applicant anticipates it to amount to £6,001, but the actual amount will be ascertained through the final energy strategy secured through the conditions. The carbon offsetting financial contribution will be secured via s106 legal agreement.

- 6.7.3 In terms of the non-residential part of the proposal, following revisions during the application, Element Energy confirmed contention with the BREEAM pre-assessment identifying that the scheme would achieve the required “Very Good” rating. Two planning conditions are recommended to secure the BREEAM “Very Good” rating in practice. The first relates to securing an Interim BREEAM “Very Good” rating Certificate at the pre-commencement, barring partial demolition stage. The second will secure a Final BREEAM “Very Good” rating Certificate prior to the first occupation of the unit. These conditions are necessary to ensure the development is carried out in accordance with sustainable building standards, adhering to both Policy CC2 and the guidance within the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD.
- 6.7.4 In respect of all sustainability and energy based matters it is therefore concluded that the proposals are independently verified as being appropriate and policy compliant, subject to the recommended conditions and obligation relating to carbon offsetting.

8) Flooding and SuDS

- 6.8.1 Given the application site is located within Flood Zone 2 and is not an allocated site for development, the applicant has duly submitted a supporting sequential test assessment. This builds on the separate assessment submitted and considered satisfactory at the time of the previously dismissed at appeal proposal. In this instance, on its own merits, it is considered that the sequential test has been satisfied by the information and evidence provided by the applicant. In short, this sufficiently demonstrates that there are no reasonably available sites with a lower probability of flooding that would be appropriate for the type of development proposed.
- 6.8.2 With the sequential test passed, the next consideration is the exception test. In line with the NPPG the proposed uses would fall into the ‘more vulnerable’ (residential) and ‘less vulnerable’ (shop) categories. ‘Table 2: Flood risk vulnerability and flood zone ‘incompatibility’’ of the NPPG (Paragraph: 079 Reference ID: 7-079-20220825 Revision date: 25 08 2022) confirms that the exception test is not required in flood zone 2. Whilst the report submitted by the applicant also states this, the applicant has nevertheless gone onto assess the proposals against the exception test. Officers do not consider that to be necessary, given there is no requirement to do so.
- 6.8.3 In addition, the applicant has submitted a site-specific Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and Surface Water Drainage Strategy. The provision of all but one of the residential units above ground floor level assists in general terms, whilst the FRA also confirms that the ground floor residential unit will also have finished floor levels in excess of the required 300mm above the 1 in 100 year river plus 31% climate change allowance flood level (it will be a minimum of 310mm). A series of other mitigation measures are proposed within the FRA, such as residents signing up to flood warnings from the Environment Agency. It is considered that all of the proposed mitigation measures are suitable and appropriate, as secured via a

compliance condition, in order to satisfactorily reduce the risk of flooding to the proposed development in line with Policy EN18.

- 6.8.4 Turning to consider SuDS matters, the RBC Lead Local Flood Authority comments at section 4.11 above confirm satisfaction with the broadly intended approach to reduce surface run-off at the site. In this instance it is necessary for full details to be secured via condition, which will be duly secured.

9) Other matters - S106, pre-commencement conditions & Equality

- 6.9.1 S106 Legal Agreement: Previous sections of this assessment have already outlined that various elements will be secured via legal agreement, relating to affordable housing (and associated) matters, open space, highways works, the car club and carbon offsetting. In addition, there is a separate requirement to secure an Employment and Skills Plan (ESP) for both the Construction phase of the development, as per the REDA response at section 4.12 above. This is required in line with Policy CC9 and the adopted Employment, Skills and Training SPD. The applicant has not yet decided whether this will take the form of a contractor-led ESP to be progressed on site, or the payment of an equivalent financial contribution, which as per the SPD formula amounts to £6,621.83. The legal agreement will be worded flexibly to enable either eventuality.

- 6.9.2 It is considered that each and every obligation referenced within this report would comply with the NPPF and Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) in that they would be: i) necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms, ii) directly related to the development and iii) fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development. Similar heads of terms were considered in the previous appeal at the site, with the Inspector confirming these met the tests in the NPPF. In this instance the Heads of Terms have been agreed by the applicant and broadly follow those outlined by the applicant at the outset of the application (building on those discussed as part of the previously dismissed at appeal proposals). A S106 Legal Agreement is in the process of being prepared to secure these obligations, in the event of a positive resolution at the Planning Applications Committee meeting.

- 6.9.3 Pre-commencement conditions: the number of pre-commencement (any development, including demolition) has been limited, in line with national guidance. The detailed wording of the pre-commencement conditions, in relation to the recording of the existing buildings, the contract for redevelopment, the demolition and construction method statement and contaminated land were agreed via email reply from the agent on 16/01/2023. This approach is in line with the requirements of section 100ZA(5) of the Town and Country Planning Act.

- 6.9.4 **Equality:** In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. The key equalities protected characteristics include age, disability, sex, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sexual orientation. It is considered that there is no indication or evidence that the protected groups have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular application.

7. CONCLUSION, INCLUDING THE OVERALL PLANNING BALANCE

- 7.1 The application is required to be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise, as per Section 38(6) of the

Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.

- 7.2 As a consequence the harmful impacts of the proposed development are required to be weighed against the benefits. On the basis of the assessment above the harmful impacts are considered to include the overprovision of 1-bedroom flats within the mix of residential units, although in referencing this it is also acknowledged that the Policy CR6 mix is a guide and includes a caveat that it should be followed unless it can be clearly demonstrated that a policy compliant mix would render the development unviable; such a case is considered to have been clearly demonstrated in this instance. Other harmful impacts include some deficiencies identified in respect of daylight and sunlight provision for future occupiers, the lack of rented units within the affordable housing tenure (although if this was provided it would worsen the viability position and call into question the negotiated provision) and the less than significant harm to the significance of the locally listed buildings at the site.
- 7.3 The harmful impacts of the development need to be weighed with the benefits of the proposals. The applicant has outlined a series of planning benefits as part of the documentation submitted in support of the proposals, with those of particular note summarised as follows:
- The delivery of 29 homes to positively contribute to housing supply in Reading.
 - All residential units meet the Nationally Described Space Standards, provide a mix of 1, 2 and 3-bed units within a highly accessible location and provide a shared external rooftop space, with most units also providing private amenity space, such as balconies.
 - Retaining and repairing a locally listed building, thereby securing the long term use of the asset as part of the story of Reading's Victorian Industrial heritage, with the building where works are proposed having been vacant for over 4 years.
 - The provision of a carefully designed solution which retains part of the locally listed building and proposes coherent design response in the transition between the retained and proposed elements.
 - The design of the newly proposed part of the building takes cues from the existing building, particularly with regards to the use of materials and detailing.
 - Provision of an enhanced retail space, with an active and a visually enhanced frontage along Caversham Road and the provision of an employment generating use within the building as part of a mixed use development.
 - The provision of a biodiverse roof and soft landscaping to assist biodiversity
- 7.4 The policy compliant level of affordable housing is another planning benefit, with RBC Valuations considering the offer to exceed what is considered to be an appropriate contribution in a viability context. Officers welcome and support the negotiated offer as being fully policy compliant. Set within the viability context it is therefore a planning benefit of the scheme.
- 7.5 Another notable benefit is the scheme making efficient use of a brownfield site in a highly accessible and sustainable location to facilities and services, such as the close proximity to Reading mainline railway station and bus stops. Other benefits of the scheme include the delivery of cycle works proposed on Northfield Road (to achieve sustainable travel aims of the Local Plan and LTP), the highly energy efficient nature of the proposals including rooftop photovoltaics and commitment to investigating ground source heat pump opportunities, and finally the economic benefits through the construction stage, including to local labour through the employment skills and training plan, and beyond with the non-residential use proposed.

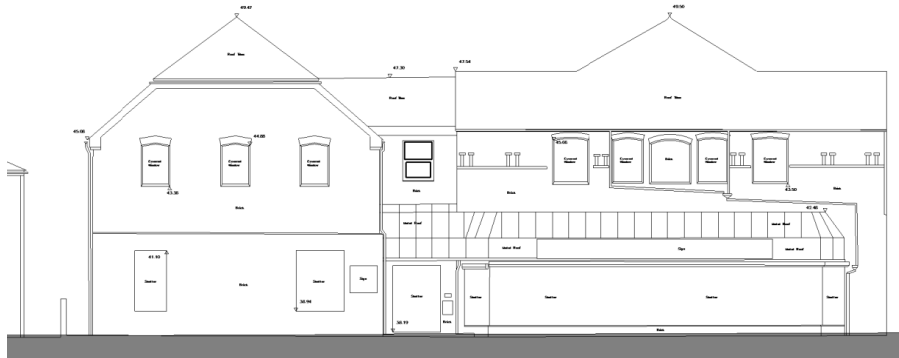
- 7.6 As a consequence of the above, officers advise that the conflicts with the development plan are considered to be outweighed by the above stated benefits of the proposals in this specific instance. It is considered that officers have applied a suitable planning balance when reaching this conclusion.
- 7.7 Therefore, when returning to the subject of test 1 of Policy EN4, as initially discussed at section 6.2 of this report (also linking back to the CUDO comments at section 4.2 of this report), it is concluded that it has been demonstrated that the benefits of the development significantly outweigh the level of harm to the significance of the locally listed buildings. This is both in terms of the individual buildings at the site and cumulatively in terms of the group value too. Accordingly, the proposals are considered to comply with Policy EN4 in full. Furthermore, in relation to the NPPF requirement (paragraph 203) for a balanced judgement in weighing an application where there is an effect on non-designated heritage assets, further to sections 4.2 and 6.2 of this report, it is considered that the benefits of the scheme outweigh the scale of harm and significance of the asset in this case, as evidenced above. Therefore, the proposals are considered to be compliant with paragraph 203 of the NPPF.
- 7.8 In overall terms the proposals are considered to be acceptable within the context of national and local planning policies, as detailed in the appraisal above. As such, full planning permission is recommended for approval, subject to the conditions and completion of the S106 Legal Agreement outlined at the outset of this report.

Case Officer: Jonathan Markwell

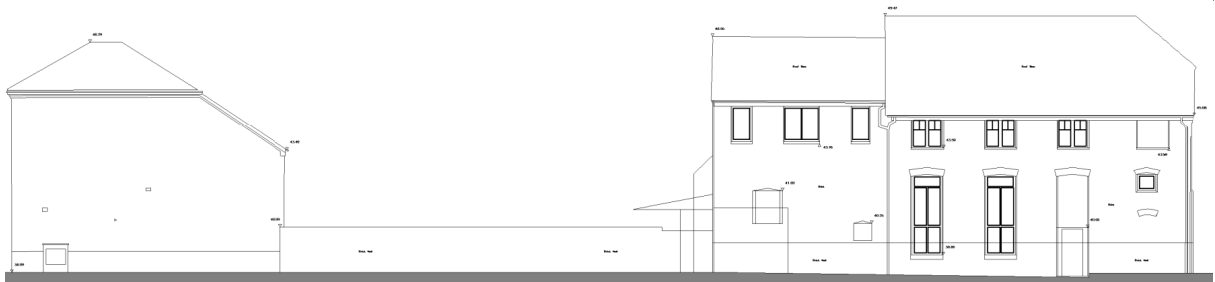
Appendices:

- 1) Existing elevations and plans
- 2) Demolition plans, elevations and visuals
- 3) Proposed floor plans
- 4) Proposed elevations, including existing and proposed streetscene comparisons and proposed CGIs
- 5) Proposed sections
- 6) Proposed materials
- 7) Changes to the proposed massing in comparison with the dismissed at appeal scheme
- 8) Proposed materials sought at the outset of this application - superseded during the course of the application in November 2022
- 9) Refused and dismissed at appeal elevations (part 5, part 7 storeys)
- 10) Comparison of the existing, CGI as proposed (materials have changed) and CGI of the as dismissed at appeal scheme
- 11) Appeal decision APP/E0345/W/20/3263270
- 12) Existing site photographs
- 13) Aerial views of the application site and surrounding area looking south (Google maps)

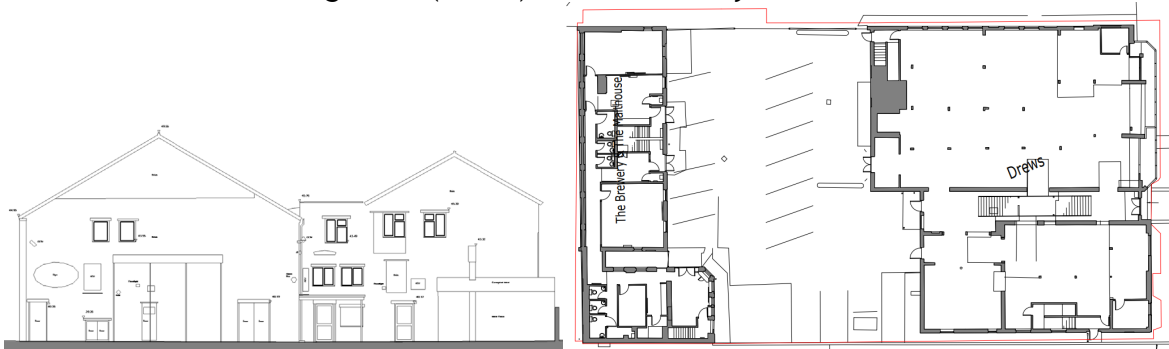
1) Existing elevations and plans



Existing Caversham Road (above) and Northfield Road (below) elevations



Existing south (above) and west courtyard elevations



Existing ground (above) and first and roof (below) plans

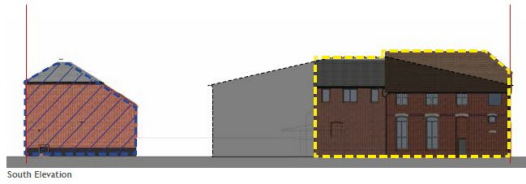





2) Demolition plans, elevations and visuals

DEMOLITION STRATEGY

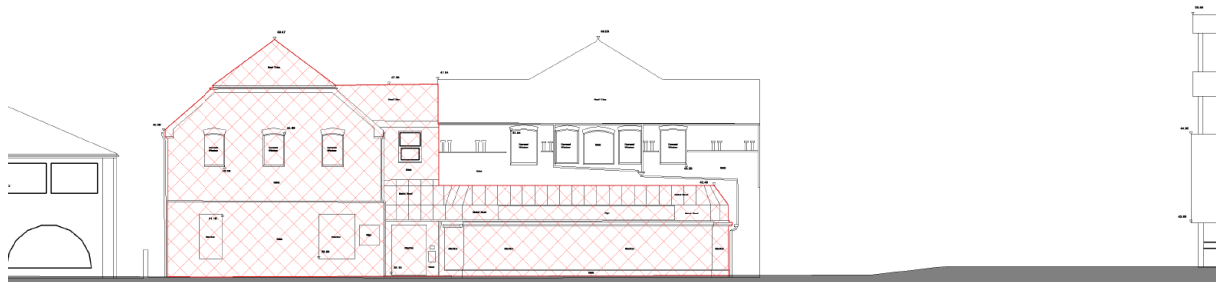
The proposal includes demolition of the southern building facing Caversham Road and part of the corner building facing Caversham Road and Northfield Road. This is highlighted in yellow on the elevations below and the plan opposite.

The existing unoriginal shopfront will be replaced with a new, sympathetic intervention that responds sensitively to the existing building and provides a modern frontage that is suitable for commercial use (pink).



- Key**
-  To be demolished
 -  To be retained
 -  Ground floor facade to be replaced

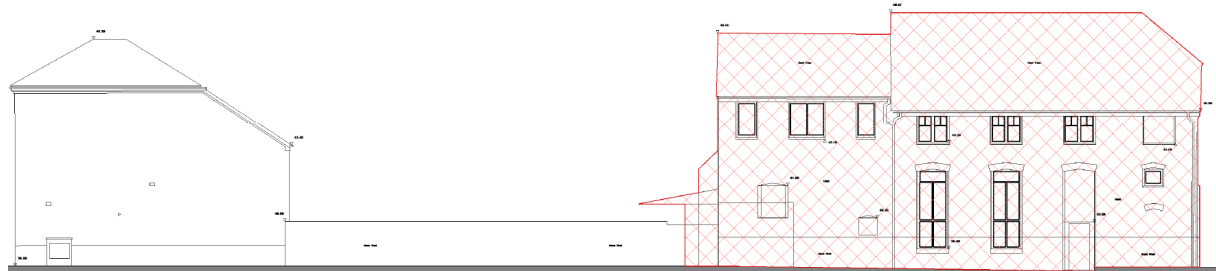
Extract from DAS summarising the extent of demolition and retention works proposed



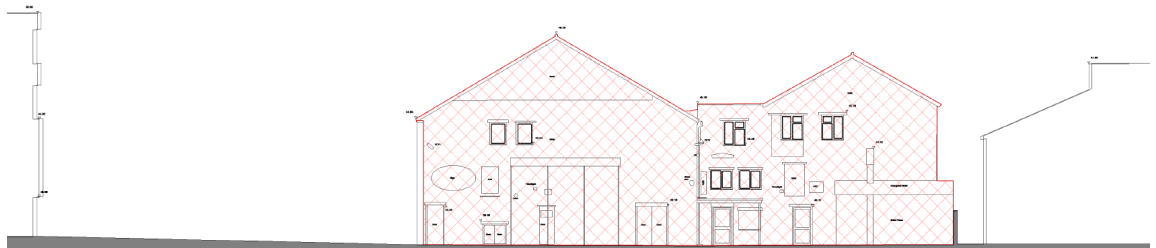
Caversham Road elevation - demolition shown in red



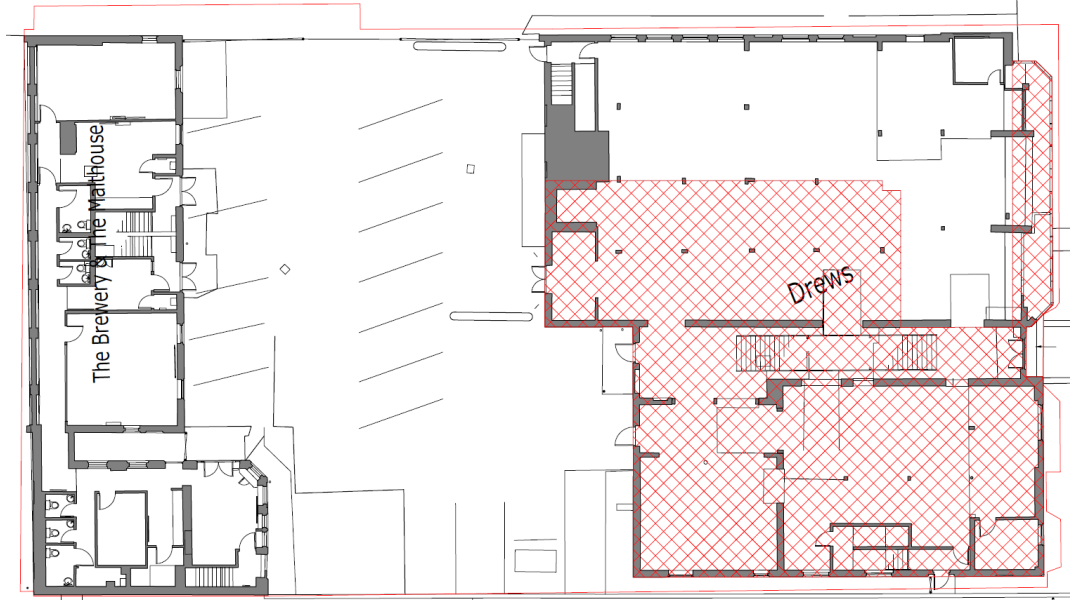
Northfield Road elevation - demolition shown in red



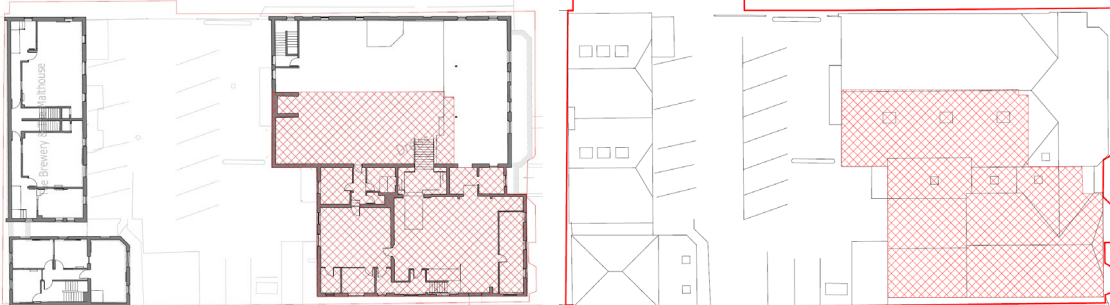
South elevation - demolition shown in red



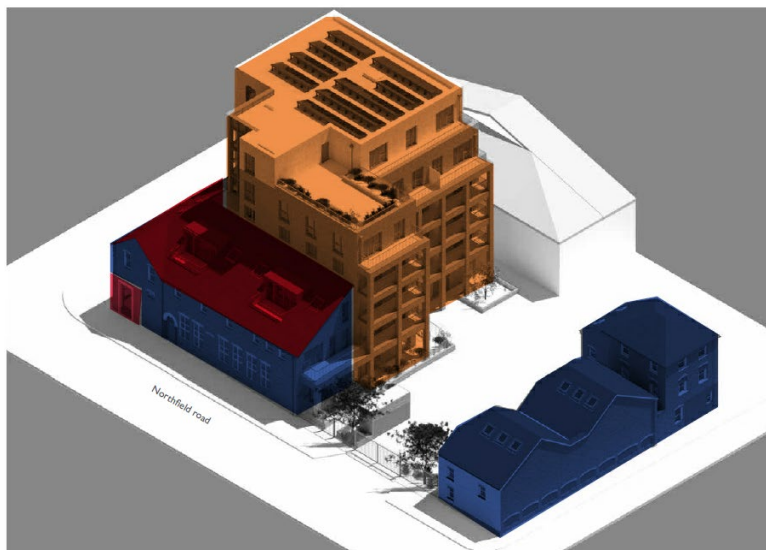
West elevation of building fronting Caversham Road - demolition shown in red



Demolition plans - ground floor (above), first and roof plans (below)



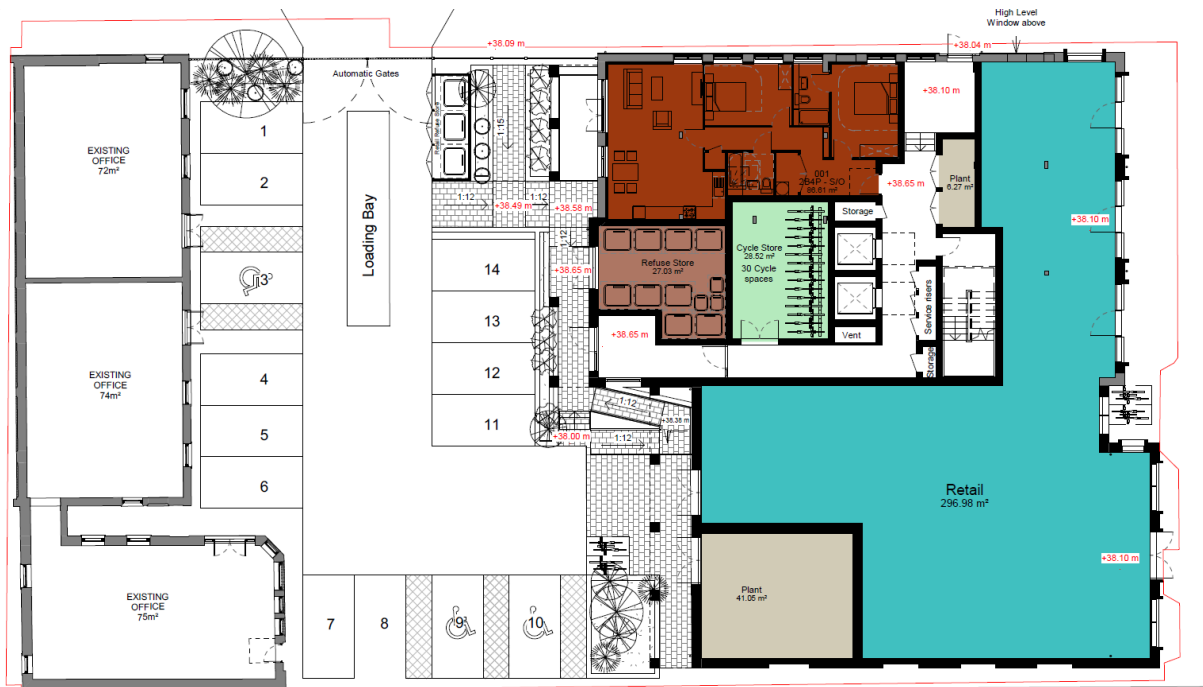
This diagrams highlights which parts of the proposal are new, retained or restored.



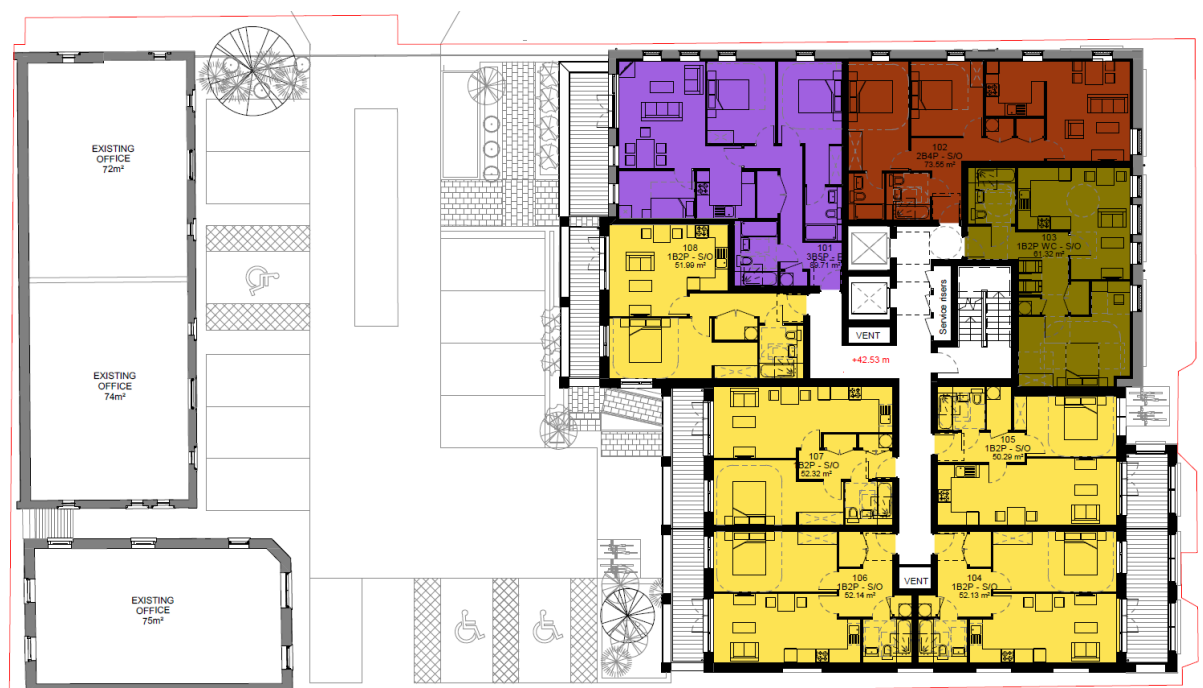
- Key**
- New build
 - Retained
 - Restored

CGI showing the proposals and extent of retention and restoration works

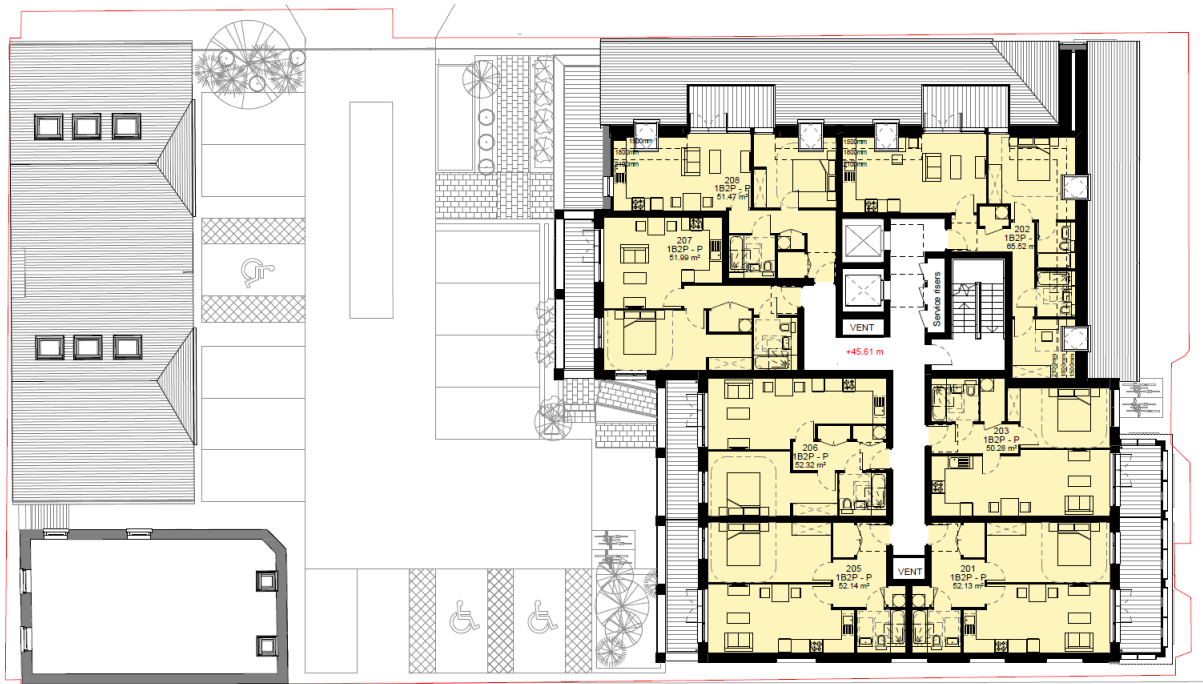
3) Proposed floor plans



Proposed ground floor plan - retail, 1x2-bed shared ownership affordable housing unit, retained offices, access, parking, waste and landscaping



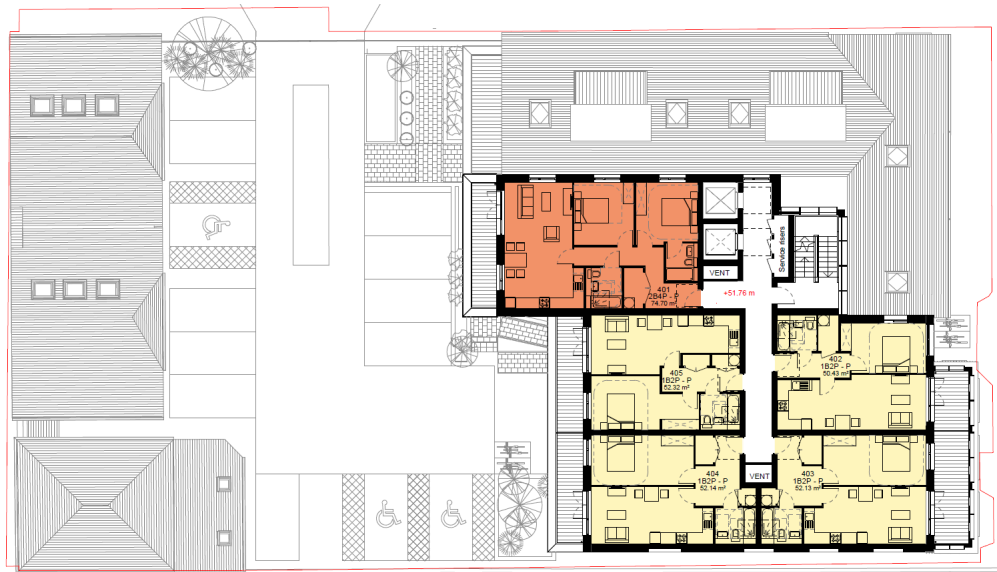
Proposed first floor plan - 6x1-bed and 1x2-bed shared ownership affordable housing units, 1x3-bed market housing unit and existing offices



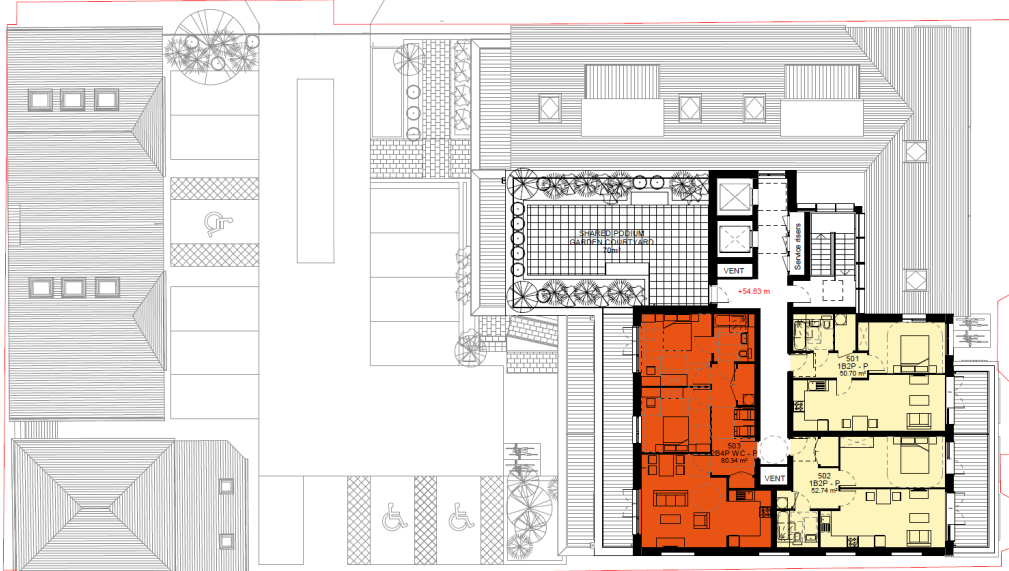
Proposed second floor plan - 7x1-bed market housing units and existing offices



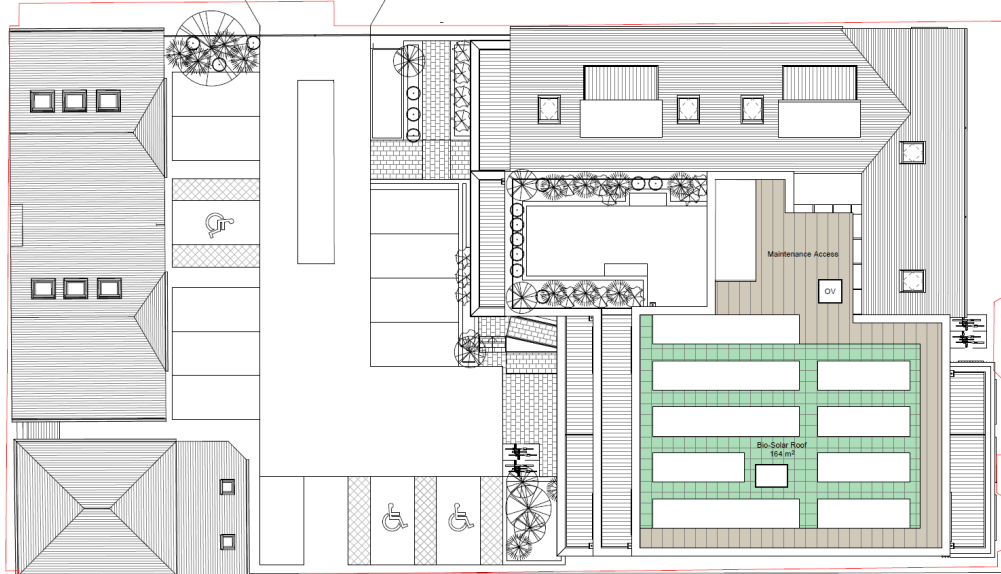
Proposed third floor plan - 4x1 and 1x2-bed market housing units



Proposed fourth floor plan - 4x1 and 1x2-bed market housing units



Proposed fifth floor plan - 2x1 and 1x2-bed market housing units and shared courtyard



Proposed roof plan - Photovoltaics and biodiverse roof

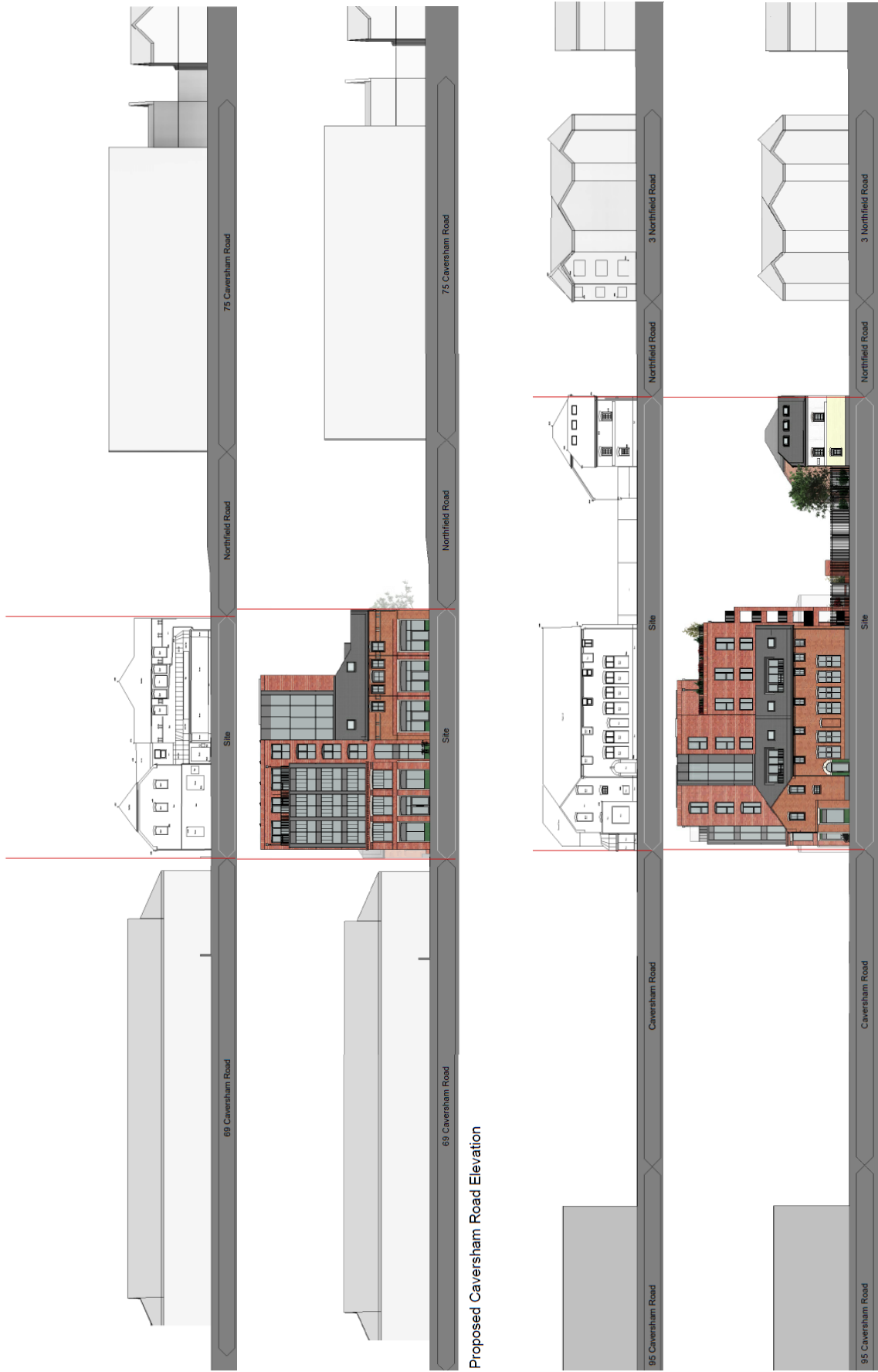
4) Proposed elevations, including existing and proposed streetscene comparisons and proposed CGIs



Proposed Caversham Road elevation



Proposed Northfield Road elevation



Existing and Proposed Caversham Road and Northfield Road street elevations



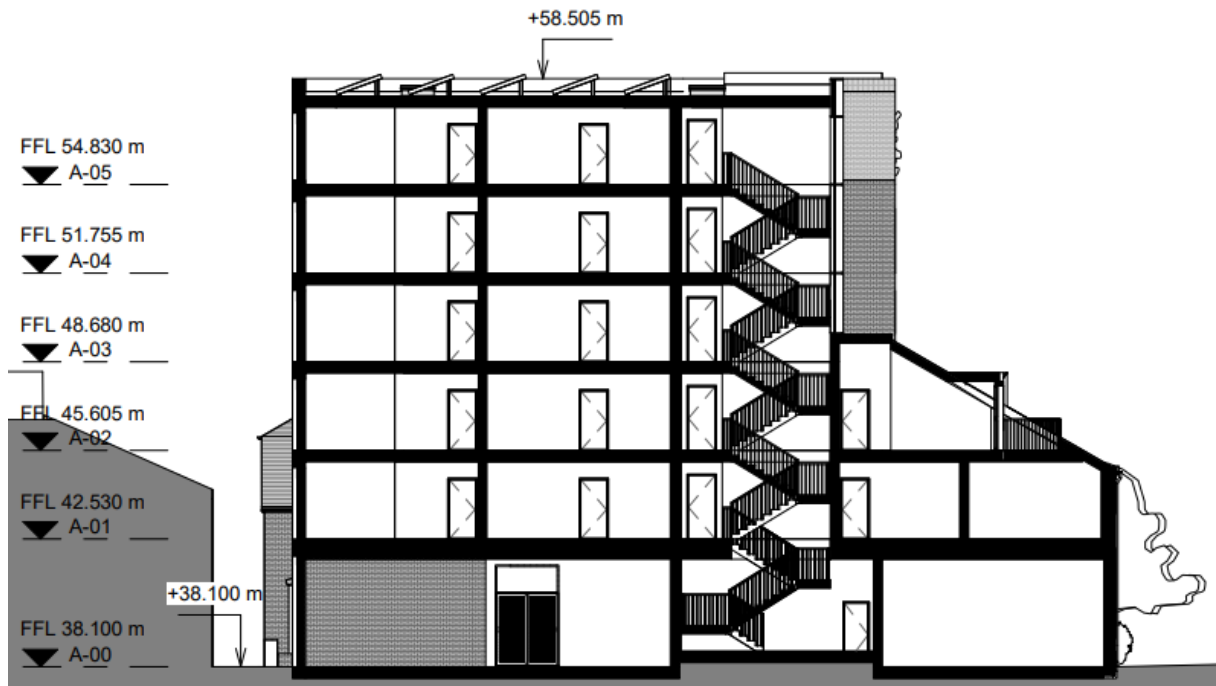
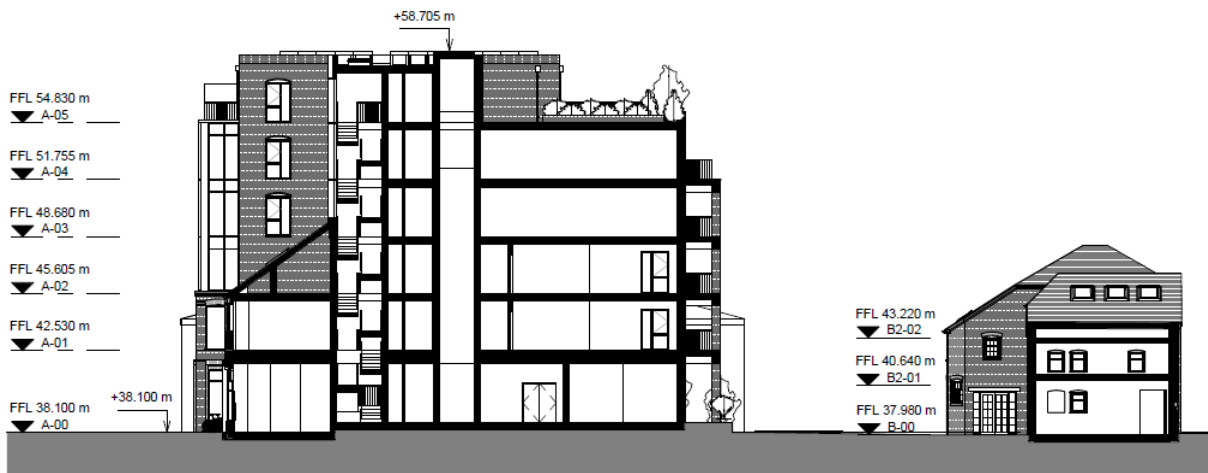
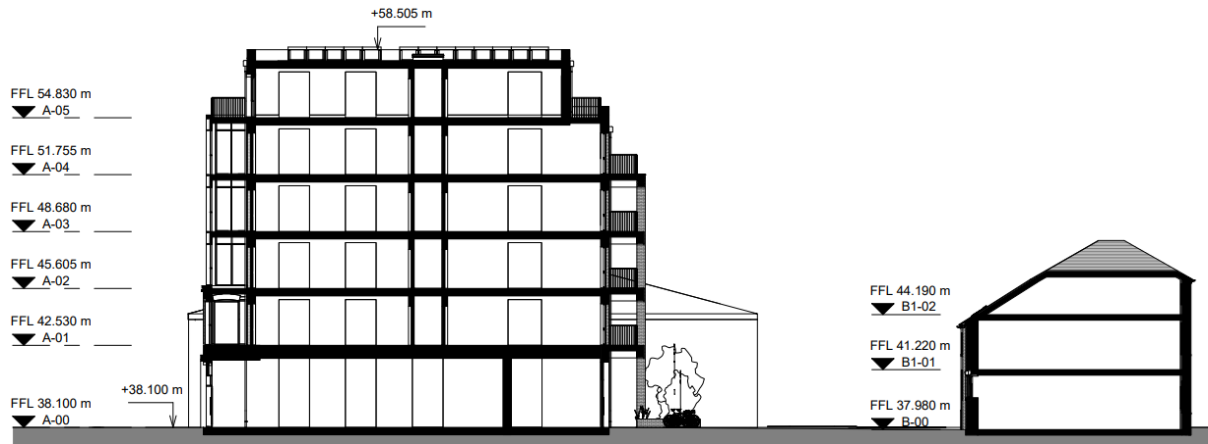
Proposed south and west elevations



CGI from Caversham Road looking south-west showing the junction with Northfield Road



CGI from Northfield Road looking south-east
 (outline of proposed massing of 80 Caversham Road shown in the background - ref 182252)
 5) Proposed sections



6) Proposed Materials Proposed materiality

Red Brick

The former malthouse was built using an orange/red brick in English cross bond. The predominant material in the new extension is red brick. This brick is proposed to be darker than the existing one to provide a clear distinction between the retained and new elements. More detail on the brick choice will be provided at the detailed design stage, however the Wienerberger Chartham Multi brick would be a suitable choice. Common bond is proposed for the new brick as this reflects the new construction and provides a distinct contrast with the English cross bond used on the former malthouse.

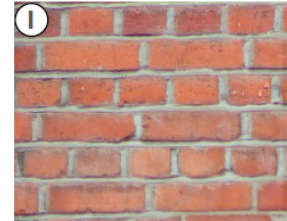
Glazed brick

The existing building uses green glazed brick to frame the former entrance. The scheme proposes to use green glazed brick within the shop front design.

Buff Brick

The existing building utilises buff soldier course headers. The use of buff brick has been proposed to frame the new shop fronts to provide a visual link to the existing detailing.

Existing materials to be retained



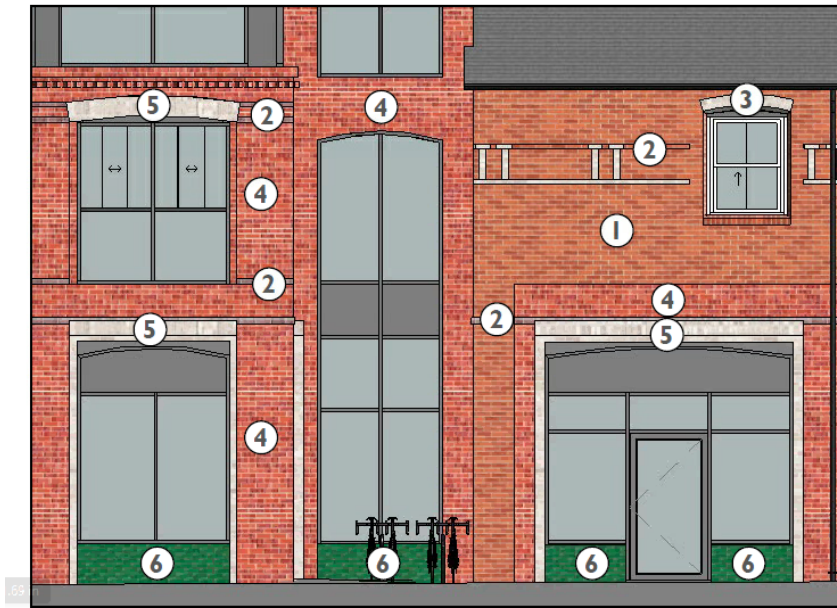
Orange/red brick in English cross bond



Blue brick banding



Arch buff soldier course headers



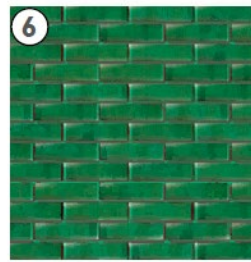
Proposed new materials



Red brick in common bond



Buff brick soldier course



Green glazed brick



Wienerberger Chartham Multi brick with a precedent image of the brick in use above at the Springfield Hospital in Tooting, London.



Existing green glazed brick used



Caversham Road proposed materials

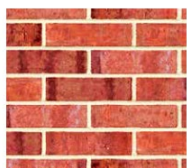


The 3D image opposite illustrates the set back between new extension and existing building.



3D bay image

-  New insertion
-  Remains as existing



1. Red brick



2. Brick verandas



3. Metal railing



4. Dormer detail with terrace



5. Swift bricks

Extract of proposed Northfield Road / western courtyard elevation materials

7) Changes to the proposed massing in comparison with the dismissed at appeal scheme



Caversham Road (please note that the proposed materials differ to those now proposed)



Northfield Road (above) and south & west courtyard (below) elevations



8) Proposed materials sought at the outset of this application - superseded during the course of the application in November 2022, but shown here for information



9) Refused and dismissed at appeal elevations (part 5, part 7 storeys)



Dismissed at appeal Caversham Road (above) and Northfield Road (below) elevations



10) Comparison of the existing, CGI as proposed (materials have changed) and CGI of the as dismissed at appeal scheme



Existing view from Caversham Road



Proposed massing (buff brick now red brick)



Dismissed at appeal massing



Existing view from Northfield Road



Proposed massing (buff brick now red brick)



Dismissed at appeal massing

11) Appeal decision APP/E0345/W/20/3263270



Appeal Decision

Hearing Held on 24 March 2021

Site visit made on 31 March 2021

by **J P Longmuir BA (Hons) DipUD MRTPI**

an Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State

Decision date: 14 May 2021

Appeal Ref: APP/E0345/W/20/3263270
71-73 Caversham Road, Reading, RG1 8JA

- The appeal is made under section 78 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 against a refusal to grant planning permission.
 - The appeal is made by S2 Caversham Ltd against the decision of Reading Borough Council.
 - The application Ref 191792, dated 5 November 2019, was refused by notice dated 16 October 2020.
 - The development proposed is the demolition of former retail warehouse and erection of a mixed-use building comprising 44 residential units consisting of x5 affordable units, 194sqm of retail floorspace (Use Class A1) at ground floor and associated car parking, cycle parking and landscaping.
-

Decision

1. The appeal is dismissed.

Procedural Matters

2. The description of development above is taken from the appeal form which tallies with the decision notice.
3. The third reason on the Council's decision notice related to the absence of a Section 106 agreement. However, this was jointly drafted during the appeal process and the wording was finalised at the Hearing, where upon the Council withdrew their objections.

Main Issues

4. The main issues are:
 - the effect of the proposal on the character and appearance of the area and;
 - the effect of the proposal on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset.

Reasons

The effect on character and appearance

5. Caversham Road is a busy and wide main artery through north west Reading, which leads to the town centre. There are wide footpaths along both sides of the road indicating it is a main pedestrian thoroughfare.

<https://www.gov.uk/planning-inspectorate>

6. The site is within a discernible suburban part of Reading, which is west of Caversham Road. To the east is an area of modern commercial buildings on former railway sidings which back onto Reading station and the appeal site is prominent from the train. Northfield Road joins the west side of Caversham Road and the appeal site is on the corner.
7. The appeal site is part of the frontage buildings on the east side of Caversham Road and is segregated from the town centre by a railway viaduct. The frontage has low rise brick warehouse style buildings and an art deco fire station. Continuing northwards, after the Northfield Road junction, the tallest building is a modern storage facility of 3 floors, and thereafter northwards towards Caversham, the architecture is typified by Victorian buildings, two to two and a half storey in height, closely fronting the road.
8. The site is on a prominent corner with Northfield Road, which soon after the appeal site is a residential area. Except for Monmouth Court, an undistinguished modern redevelopment, and the side of the above storage building, Northfield Road is characterised by two storey uniform Victorian terraced houses with elaborate detailing, and small front gardens. The Victorian style is continued west of Northfield Road into the surrounding streets.
9. The appeal site includes two groups of buildings segregated by tarmacked car parking and access. The rear group of buildings are brick, at a height of two and a half storey. These would be retained in their current use as offices, whereas the frontage building would be demolished and replaced with a building of 7 storeys with pitched roofs fronting Caversham Road, dropping to a 5 storey flat roof to the rear.
10. The new building would be substantially taller than the surroundings, particularly in relation to the west side of Caversham Road and Northfield Road where it would appear unduly tall, diverting attention from the street level to a new higher skyline. It would appear dominating and out of scale, more appropriate to an urban centre rather than a suburban location.
11. The perceived height of the building would also be emphasised by its narrow footprint. This would lead to a pronouncedly vertical orientated building.
12. The proposal would drop to 5 storeys towards Northfield Road. However even at that height it would appear out of context. Additionally, the seventh storey element behind would be visible from parts of Northfield Road.
13. The elevations show a distinct ground floor level which would help break up the perception of the height. However, the top two floors would have elongated windows, which would accentuate the perception of height as the eye would follow their long length. Moreover, this effect would be emphasised by window mullions which would be eye-catching details at the highest point.
14. The elevations show that the southern wall of the seven- storey element would be blank. Whilst window outlines would be provided by some reveals, these would offer only very limited relief and interest to the otherwise large and high expanse of walling. Consequently, the building would appear austere and overly dominant when seen from the south.
15. The east side of Caversham Road is allocated for major re-development which is likely to involve some high replacement buildings. This site is the subject of a current application but has yet to be determined. In any event this area has a

different character being composed of large, modern commercial buildings whereas the west side has more traditional style buildings. Caversham Road forms a wide and assertive segregating boundary. This is confirmed by the Council's policy work for the area. Their analysis in the 'Townscape and Planning Constraints', copied in the Icen Heritage and Townscape Assessment, denotes the east side of the Caversham Road as a tall buildings cluster but not the west side. The 2009 Reading Central Area Action Plan shows the rear of the appeal site as a 'transition zone of low residential', whilst major development is only foreseen to the east side of Caversham Road.

16. I therefore conclude that the proposal would cause significant harm to the character and appearance of the area.
17. Policy CC7 of the Reading Borough Local Plan requires high design quality which maintains and enhances the character and appearance of the area. The detailed criteria require a positive response to local context and the policy also makes reference to height and scale. Policy EN4 of the above Plan requires that the replacement building draws upon the historical qualities of the previous building. Paragraph 127 of the National Planning Policy Framework (the Framework) requires proposals are sympathetic to local character and history. The proposal would be in conflict with these policies.

Non-designated heritage asset

18. The proposal would result in the loss of the frontage buildings, which the Council has recently identified as a non-designated heritage asset, following a submission by the local community. Historic England's Conservation Principles, Policies and Guidance 2008 advises on the components of significance: evidential, historical, aesthetic and communal.
19. The existing building has decorative brickwork, a low height with pitched roofs in various materials and notable window openings. It looks like a Victorian warehouse.
20. The site is a landmark due to its corner position, the openness of the street and alignment of Caversham Road. The massing of the buildings is broken into several linked elements which attract the eye, particularly a gable which projects northwards towards the view from Caversham Road. Distinctively large windows on the ground floor address Northfield Road and also suggest an industrial intent.
21. It is evident that the buildings were built between 1871 and 1877 and were designed and built as maltings for the well-known businessman and maltster Dowson. It supplied Simmonds one of the main brewers in Reading who lacked the capacity at the time and capitalised on the demand for barley following the repeal of its taxation.
22. The buildings were only in maltings use for 30 years but brewing was important to Reading, contributing to its social and economic development. Hence the buildings are helpful to show the town's growth and its links to the surrounding countryside which supplied the barley.
23. There have been some alterations to the original buildings. These include a ground floor shop window style projection with a sheet roof, but it is in muted materials and subservient to the front elevation. Some of the windows have been replaced but their openings and the surrounds are intact. Indeed, the

pattern of openings is notable. The roof covering to one part has been replaced by sheeting but that does not detract from a functional industrial appearance and emphasises the broken massing of the roofscape. Part of the rear of one building and the kiln have been lost but the overall shape, form and massing are very evident and readily suggest Victorian industrial buildings. The original use as maltings can be appreciated.

24. The proposal does allow the retention of the rear buildings. However, their setting would be dramatically changed by being adjacent to tall buildings, with no historic connection. Whilst the design is intended to make references to the original buildings' architectural features, the benefit would be denuded by the height of the new building.
25. Architecturally there are similarities between both sets of existing buildings in their height, scale, form, broken massing and distinctive rooflines featuring half hips and full hips. The detailing is similar with cills, arches /window openings, and some painted walls. Furthermore, historically the buildings were part of the same malting operation. Their architectural and historical value is largely as a whole, and the proposal would harm their group value.
26. The historic maps indicate that the building pre-dates much of the residential development on Northfield Road. The repetitive terraces are indicative of workers homes and the industrial buildings at the maltings do not appear out of place. Whilst the building on the corner of Swansea Road/ Northfield Road is permitted for redevelopment, there is a feeling of cohesion and connectivity between the appeal building and the Victorian surroundings.
27. Reference was made by all parties to the brewery buildings elsewhere which show Reading's past, in particular Simmonds at Fobney Street. However, this converted building has an overly fenestrated projecting balcony on its most prominent (eastern) elevation. It is also closely enveloped within an overtly residential looking cul-de-sac. I did not find that this setting evoked much sense of Reading's industrial heritage. In contrast the appeal site is very prominent and has a Victorian industrial appearance.
28. The existing building reflects the values of the Historic England Guidance, in particular, for its historic significance as an identifiable Victorian warehouse, built for the brewing industry and, aesthetic significance for its massing, form and in part detailing, as a landmark on a prominent corner. I therefore conclude that the building has significant significance as a non-designated heritage asset and its loss would harm the historic environment.
29. Policy EN4 of the Reading Borough Local Plan specifically addresses non designated heritage assets. It highlights the need to conserve architectural, archaeological or historical significance which may include the appearance, character and setting of the asset. It states that permission may be granted where the harm or loss are significantly outweighed by the benefits of the development. Policy EN1 of the same Plan covers the historic environment and includes non-designated assets. It seeks to avoid harm in the first instance and if not whether there is clear and convincing justification. Paragraph 197 of the Framework requires that the significance of the non-designated heritage asset is taken into account and a balanced judgement is required. The proposal would be in conflict with these policies.

Other matters

30. I note the submission of the legal agreement, which accords with the Council's requirements to mitigate the impact of a development of this type. It also meets the tests in paragraph 56 of the Framework. The Council at the Hearing stated that this resolved their concerns about the lack of provision for affordable housing, pedestrian/cycle facilities, car club and a skills training scheme. I concur that the submission would satisfy the concerns in the third reason for refusal.

Planning Balance

31. The proposal would provide an economic boost in its construction and indeed the section 106 agreement provides the opportunity of employment skills training. The 44 dwellings would also contribute to housing land supply, although the Council when asked at the Hearing stated that it was meeting its housing land supply requirements, nonetheless that is a minimum target. The proposal would provide 5 affordable dwellings within the development and provide a contribution for provision elsewhere which the Council confirmed could be readily used on their developments. The proposal would make use of a brownfield site, in a location extremely accessible to facilities and services. CIL/recreation payments would be a benefit but to some extent would mitigate the needs of residents rather than be a gain. The proposal would re-create an active frontage which would help vitality and surveillance. However, the carbon emissions saved by the energy efficiency of the new building would be likely to be counter balanced with the loss of the existing. A green wall is proposed but this would be small and have very limited benefit. Cycle priority works at the junction of Northfield Road/Caversham Road are also proposed.

32. However, individually or cumulatively, these benefits do not outweigh the significant harm the proposal would have on the character and appearance of the area and the significance of a non-designated heritage asset.

Conclusion

33. I therefore conclude that the appeal should be dismissed.

John Longmuir

INSPECTOR

LIST OF APPEARANCES

THE APPELLANTS

Sam Berg	Director of S2 Estates
Tom Vernon BA(Hons) Dip TP MRTPI	Director at Quod
Daniel Rech (BA)Hons Dip TP MRTPI	Senior Planner at Quod
Laurie Handcock MA MSC IHBC MCIfA	Director Icen Projects
Dominic Chapman BA(Hons) BArch RIBA	Partner JTP Architects

THE LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY

Jonathan Markwell BSc(Hons) MSc LRTPI Principal Planning Officer

Bruce Edgar FRSA, IHBC, M.Phil, M.PIA, MICOMOS B.Arch Conservation and Urban Design Officer

INTERESTED PARTIES

Mary Neale MCIFA

Bell Tower Community Association

Evelyn Williams BA(Hons) ACA MBA

Reading Conservation Area Advisory Committee

Cllr Tony Page

Reading Borough Council

Cllr Karen Rowland

Reading Borough Council

12) Existing site photographs



From Caversham Road





Northfield Road



Below: west courtyard elevation





Above: Northfield Road and 'The Brewery' and 'The Malthouse' office buildings



Interior photographs from February 2021 (e.g. above right shows that the first floor eastern end timber framed double hung windows remain)



13) Aerial views of the application site & surrounding area looking south (Google maps)





Looking north



Looking east



Looking west

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COMMITTEE REPORT

BY THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR FOR ECONOMIC GROWTH AND NEIGHBOURHOOD SERVICES
READING BOROUGH COUNCIL
PLANNING APPLICATIONS COMMITTEE: 29 March 2023

Ward: Whitley

App Ref: 221844/FUL

Address: 124 Whitley Wood Road, Reading, RG2 8JG

Proposals: To provide a hard-standing and footway crossing onto the highway from the front garden onto Whitley Wood Road.

Applicant: Reading Borough Council (Property Services)

Date received (valid from): 15 December 2022

Target Decision date: 24 February 2023

RECOMMENDATION:

GRANT FULL planning permission subject to the following conditions:

Conditions:

TL1 Time Limit (Standard)

AP1 Approved Plans

DC1 Vehicular Parking (As Specified)

DC3 Vehicular Access (As Specified)

L1 Landscaping Scheme

Informatives:

IF3 Highways

I24 Do not damage the verge

I29 Access construction

1. SITE DESCRIPTION

- 1.1 The application site is a two storey end terraced property in a row of 4 properties located on a residential street in Whitley, with a front garden, part hedge and part fence fronting on to a classified road with a public footpath and grass verge. The area is characterised by a mixture of terraced, semi-detached and detached residential properties. The property is not a listed building, nor does it fall within a conservation area.

2. PROPOSAL AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

- 2.1 To provide a hard-standing to the property measuring 3.6m by 8m and footway crossing measuring 2.7m wide, onto the highway from the front garden onto Whitley Wood Road to assist with accessibility to the property.

3. RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

- 3.1 None.

4. CONSULTATIONS

4.1 The following addresses were consulted by letter.

126 Whitley Wood Road, Reading, RG2 8JG
122 Whitley Wood Road, Reading, RG2 8JG

4.2 No letters of representation have been received.

Internal Consultees:

4.3 Transport Officer:

Although visibility splays of 2.4m x 70m which are required for the introduction of a dropped crossing on to a classified road have not been illustrated on plans, I am satisfied that these can be achieved. A drainage cover is located within the grass verge outside the property. This will need to be illustrated on plans. Should this need to be relocated the cost of this would be fully met by the applicant and require the appropriate licenses from the Councils Highway Department. Please ask the applicant to submit revised plans identifying the location of the drain cover relative to the proposed access and parking area.

4.4 The applicant provided amended plans as requested and Transport made the following comments:

Highways have visited 124 Whitley Wood Road to check the location of the drain in the grass verge and they have recommended we avoid the drain. The applicant will need to move the access away from the drain by a minimum of 900mm as this is the length of the kerb stone. Revised plans will be required illustrating the relocated dropped crossing and position of the drain.

4.5 The applicant subsequently provided amended plans as requested and Transport made the following comments:

Highways have visited the site and have confirmed a minimum of 900mm distance is required. A licence will be required to undertake all works on the public highway which includes removal of the grass verge and introduction of a new access. Submitted plans demonstrate a minimum distance of 900mm, therefore plans are deemed acceptable

Equality Act 2010:

4.6 In determining this application the Council is required to have regard to its obligations under the Equality Act 2010. However, there is no indication or evidence (including from consultation on the application) that the protected groups identified by the Act have or will have different needs, experiences, issues and priorities in relation to this particular planning application. Therefore in terms of the key equalities protected characteristics it is considered there would be no significant adverse impacts as a result of the development.

5. LEGAL AND PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

- 5.1 Section 38(6) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 requires that proposals be determined in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Material considerations include relevant policies in the National Planning Policy framework (NPPF) - among them the 'presumption in favour of sustainable development'. The following local and national planning policy and guidance is relevant to this application:

National Planning Policy

National Planning Policy Framework (2021)
National Planning Practice Guidance
SPD - Design Guide to House Extensions 2021

Reading Borough Local Plan (2019)

CC7 (Design and the Public Realm)
CC8 (Safeguarding Amenity)
TR1 Achieving the Transport Strategy
TR3 Access, Traffic and Highway-Related Matters
TR5 Car and Cycle Parking and Electric Vehicle Charging

6. APPRAISAL

Character and Appearance

- 6.1 Policy CC7 (Design and the Public Realm) requires that all developments be of high design quality.
- 6.2 The proposal would result in the partial loss of the existing front garden. Front driveways are a characteristic of the area and as such it is considered reasonable to allow provision of a driveway to part of the frontage, subject to a basic landscaping scheme to provide additional hedging/and or trees to mitigate the change. Subject to this the proposal would not result in harm to the character or appearance of the street.

Transport Matters

- 6.3 The Design Guide to House Extensions Supplementary Planning Document 2021 provides that Car parking should not extend onto the footpath or highway, and the risk of surface water flooding should not be worsened.
- 6.4 There is an existing driveway and adequate parking space within the property boundary. There are no works involving the driveway and parking that have been proposed as part of this application. Full details of the construction of the proposed dropped kerb and pavement crossover and the materials to be used will need to be secured through a condition. In addition the applicant will be advised, through an informative, to contact highways before any work is carried out in order to agree the access construction details and to grant a licence.
- 6.5 The proposal has also been assessed against policy TR3 as follows:

The proposals would meet the standards of the Highway Authority as per the advice received and would not harm the functioning of the transport network.

The proposals would not be detrimental to the safety of users of the transport network, including pedestrians and cyclists.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 The proposal would allow access to an existing hardstanding and would improve the accessibility of the dwelling to meet the needs of occupiers and would be acceptable in terms of the safety and functioning of the highway. There would be no material harm to the character of the area or streetscene subject to additional landscaping. In light of the above, the proposal is considered acceptable in accordance with Policies CC7, TR1, TR3 and TR5.

Case Officer: Gary Miles

Plans Considered:

Drawing no: WHIT - S1 - Part site plan as existing - not dated.

Drawing no: WHIT - H1 - Part site plan as proposed - not dated.

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 15th December 2022

Drawing no: WHIT - S1 Rev A - Part site plan as existing - not dated.

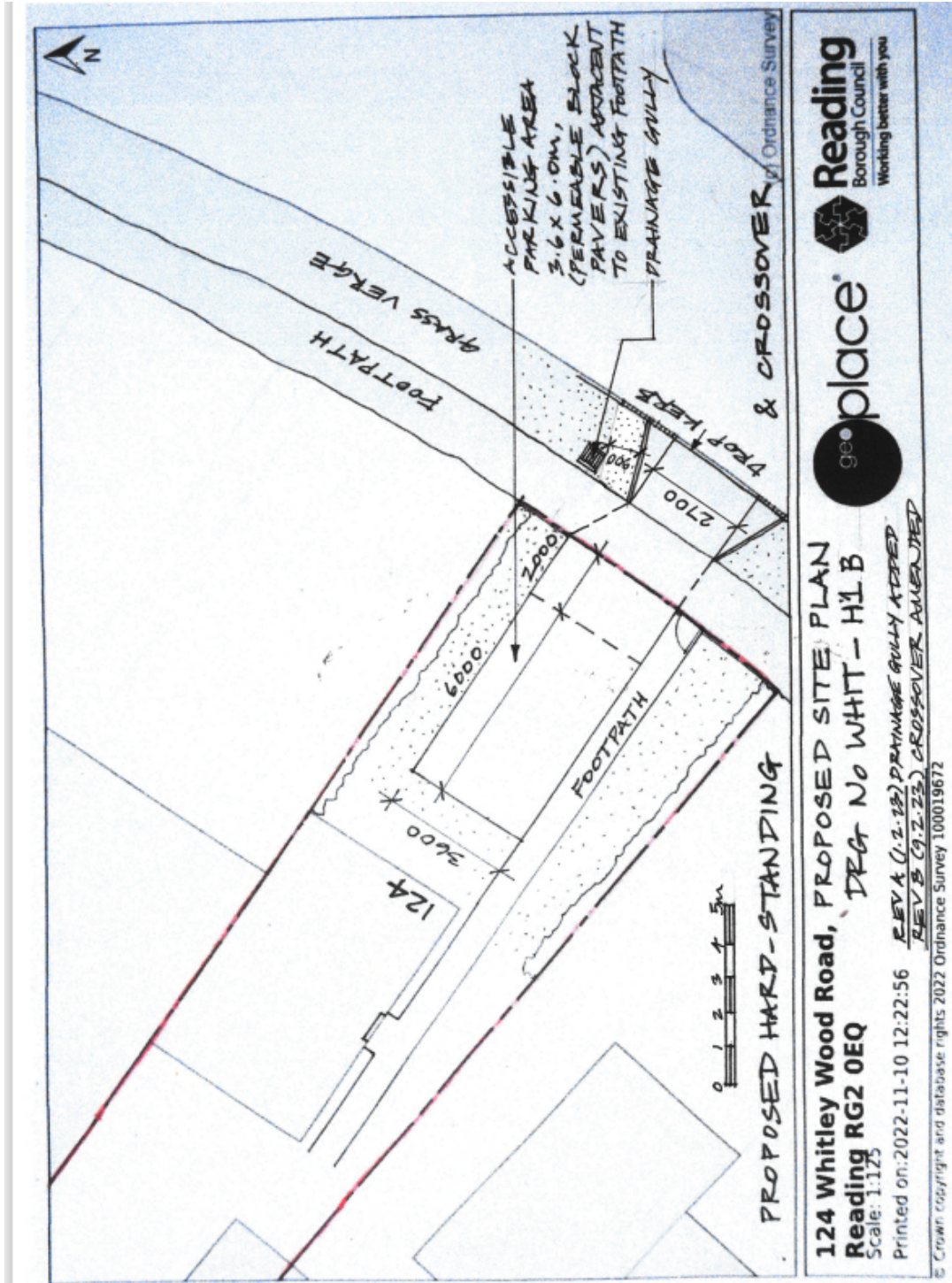
Drawing no: WHIT - H1 Rev A - Part site plan as proposed - not dated.

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 1st February 2023

Drawing no: WHIT - H1 Rev B - Part site plan as proposed - not dated.

Received by the Local Planning Authority on 9th February 2023





Proposed Layout